

Early Pioneer Years

with the

Northwestern Company

JOHN G. CAMPBELL

FORTY-FOUR YEARS  
WITH THE  
NORTHERN CREES

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Forty-Four Years

with the

Northern Crees

by

S. D. GAUDIN

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by

S. D. Gaudin

To my dear wife,  
whose life and love  
were so freely given  
to our common task

*The author hereby expresses his  
appreciation of the assistance received  
from Rev. W. G. Smith, of Winnipeg,  
in the preparation of this book.*

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## INTRODUCTION

**I**N THE ANNALS OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS there are few pages more glorious than those written by Methodist missionaries among the Cree Indians of Canada's Northwest in the hundred years following the arrival of James Evans at Norway House in 1820. Adventure, romance, courage, and consecration are to be found at every turn, and yet many of the greatest stories have never been recorded. Our literature describing the work which turned roving nomad tribes, ignorant, illiterate, dirty and disease-ridden, into intelligent Christian communities is very meagre. The great gifts of a written language, of vocational education, of training in personal hygiene and public health and the emergence of Indian leadership in a few generations, make a thrilling and encouraging record.

The Author of this little book of Memoirs, Rev. S. D. Gaudin, D.D., and his brilliant, devoted wife, made constructive and lasting contributions to the welfare of the Crees over many decades. He has done the whole Church a service in writing and publishing this book. We commend it to all those who desire to understand more fully the place of the pioneer in laying the foundations of brotherhood and justice in our national life.

KENNETH J. BEATON.

Toronto, July 1st, 1942.



# Forty-Four Years

with the

## Northern Crees

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### CHAPTER 1

#### MY EARLY LIFE

**I**T HAS BEEN SAID, "Every child has a right to be well born." As to this, in my own case I have no reason to complain. My father, Francis Gaudin, was a native of the Isle of Jersey, Channel Islands, his family having its origin in France and of Huguenot stock. According to Church History, John Wesley made several visits to the Channel Islands, and the Gaudin family received Methodism from the great founder of the denomination. My father was born in the year 1818: my mother in 1826. Her maiden name was Evas Young, and Ireland was her native land. There the Youngs also became Methodists in the time of the noted Irish preacher, Gideon Ousley.

In 1840 the family migrated from old Ireland and set their faces toward Lower Canada. It was just the kind of family that Canada needed. There were eight strong, healthy children, honest to the core, religious, buoyant and hopeful. In that far-away age ocean travel, by the old time sailing vessel, was a very slow process. Eleven weary weeks were occupied on that voyage, but was not Canada at the end? At length the long voyage terminated. A temporary stay was made in the town of Campbellton, but finally a home was

found on a farm on the north side of the Restigouche River, in Bonaventure county, Quebec Province, where my mother grew to womanhood. In the meantime my grandfather and his family, of which my father was a member, had left their old Jersey Island home, and after sundry changes, had at length settled in New Brunswick on a farm in a district named Mountain Brook, seven miles from Dalhousie. To that home my mother came as a bride from Oak Point when she married my father in 1852. To this home in course of time came a family of eight children. In the order of that family I came fifth, September 2nd, 1861, being my important day.

To my father and mother religion was first and supreme and was expressed with reality and sincerity. The morning began with regular family worship, and the day went on in accord with it,—religion, kindness and love being revealed in their lives. It thus was quite natural that the children should decide on the same kind of religion as our parents followed, and in course of time we were all converted to God in the good old Methodist way and found a place in the fellowship and service of the church. This did not deprive us of the simple pleasures of life, but on the contrary it made all life richer and fuller than it otherwise could have been.

The time came when my father decided to move from the old home in Mountain Brook, to try his fortune in Ontario, or as it was in that day commonly called Upper Canada. A few years before two sisters and a brother of my mother had moved to different places in Ontario. This certainly influenced my father's decision. But there was another important factor which led him to leave the old home. The French were moving into Mountain Brook and were taking the places of Protestants who were moving out. It thus became increasingly difficult to keep up a public school or church services, but by moving to Ontario his children would have the advan-

tage of a Protestant community, with a public school and also a Methodist church. These reasons decided father's migration to Ontario. All arrangements having been completed, we left the old place toward the last of June 1868, a few months before my seventh birthday.

There still remains with me a distinct recollection of the chief events in our life from the time of our great move. I remember how we made the journey, how we were brought out in row boats from Dalhousie to the great steamship, the *Secret*, lying at anchor in the deep waters of Bay Chaleur, where on the deck the last farewells were made. There were our two uncles, father's brothers, to whom good-byes were being said, some for the last time. Many tears were shed as the separation took place. As father's aged mother was going with us, we who were leaving, were eleven in number. To her the parting must have been a severe strain, as she was leaving six of her children. But soon the whistle sounded, and we were on our way, the old scenes gradually fading out of view. (Of all our family I, only, had the pleasure, thirty-two years later, of visiting the old place). We passed Gaspé and then steamed along the mighty St. Lawrence to historic Quebec city. Here we changed ship for Montreal. From there began our first travel by Grand Trunk train, as we rushed along on our way through Quebec and Ontario to Toronto, destined to become a great city, though then with a population of only 65,000.

While the other members of the family and other travelers were in the Toronto station waiting for a coming train, I wandered about to see what I might see. In a moment I beheld a rope hanging down within easy reach. Here was a boy's opportunity. As I pulled that rope, there suddenly arose the loud clanging of a bell. This was followed by an outrush of waiting passengers. Then not only did my father

find me but an irate officer took hold of a very frightened youngster. My father became my advocate. "What better from a boy could you expect?" he said. Thus I escaped from the clutches of the annoyed officer, but I had learned my lesson. I have never forgotten that boyish adventure of over seventy long years ago.

Soon after our arrival in Ontario and while in the home of an aunt, my youngest sister, not yet quite two years of age, sickened and died. This was my first time to see death. I remember how she passed away on my mother's knees. How dreadful death seemed to me! There was a service in the house, and at the grave-side with father and mother, while the service was read, my eyes filled with tears for I saw my mother was weeping. I saw the little coffin lowered down, down and then covered "out of sight. Thus passed little sister Minnie. I remember we were told that she had gone to be with Jesus, that the good Shepherd gathered the little lambs in His bosom and little Minnie was one of those lambs. This, in their sorrow, was the comforting faith of our parents, and now with the passage of seventy years of my own life since then, this still remains as the only faith that can bring comfort when we too are called to pass through the deep waters of affliction just as our parents did. "As one whom his mother comforteth so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted." Isa. 66:13.

After four years of great financial strain, and just as he was winning out, my father was suddenly stricken with a fatal illness. After three weeks of suffering death came to him as a release on the 28th day of November, 1872. My father's passing, at 54 years of age, was a sad but very triumphant one. As he approached the end, to us children, broken down with grief he said, "Don't cry my children! Sing "I'm going home to die no more." We were all committed to the care of the



*Rev. S. D.  
Gaudin,  
D. D.*

*Mrs. S. D.  
Gaudin,  
Reg. N.*





*Rev. S. D. Gaudin ready for a trip with the dogs and moose-skin carriage.*



*Mrs. Gaudin leaves on a nursing trip.*

*Mrs. Gaudin's  
hospital at Cross  
Lake.*





Heavenly Father. Then with three waves of the hand he was gone. My father was a man of sterling Christian character, respected by all who knew him, and this was the abiding heritage he bequeathed to his children.

When I was ten years of age trouble developed in my right knee from some injury, and from it I was a cripple for over five years. However, a good constitution, together with a mother's devoted and untiring care finally won out, and I became well and strong. When nearly sixteen I was well enough to attend school in our home village of Kimberley.

I made good progress in my studies and when seventeen I went to live in the home of an uncle in Thornbury, but attended school in the nearby village of Clarksburg, and graduated to High school in December, 1879, having written the entrance examinations in Collingwood. I then attended Thornbury School, and in the following summer wrote with success in Owen Sound, for a teacher's certificate which became professional in the following autumn, on my completing the Model course.

Toward the end of the year I located a school in Osprey township, Grey county, and began teaching after the New Year, 1880. Salaries at that time were anything but high. I had set a standard at \$350. The trustees evidently thought it their official duty to strike a good bargain and offered \$325.00. When I absolutely refused to be thus reduced, they proposed to split the difference as if buying a horse, and I was engaged at \$337. When the mid-summer vacation drew near these "clever" trustees proposed to cut the vacation by two weeks, and then waited to see what the young teacher would say. My answer was "Make the salary \$352 and it's a bargain," and it was done. It would seem there was sat-

isfaction with the year's work, as they raised my salary, for the second year. They offered me \$385, but as I had been invited to our home school at the proposed salary, I declined the Osprey offer.

I have never forgotten the experience of leaving that first school. As I began to say farewell, the children began to weep, the teacher could not restrain himself and we had a real "boo-hoo" time. How the years have fled! Many of those one-time boys and girls are now grey headed men and women. Others have passed on to the Great Beyond.

After teaching seven years, with another spent between High School and farm work, I entered Albert College, Belleville, in January 1889. In the six months I completed matriculation and also the preliminary examination, necessary for probation to the Methodist ministry. After three months preaching on the Stoco circuit, I returned to College in October, and in June 1890 graduated with senior matriculation, thus having completed the college course. Memory is still vivid of those far-away years spent at old Albert, throbbing as it was with great spiritual forces and missionary zeal. At that time a majority of the students were preparing for some phase of Christian service at home or on some foreign mission field. Many of them after years of heroic service have retired, while others have passed on with finished tasks to the reward that, we believe awaits all faithful laborers in the vineyard of our Lord.

After finishing at Albert College, I visited in Long Island, near Port Washington, in the home of my brother with whom my mother was then living. While there I noticed, in the church paper, that under the authority of Rev. Dr. Alexander Sutherland, general secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church of Canada, an appeal was made for teachers

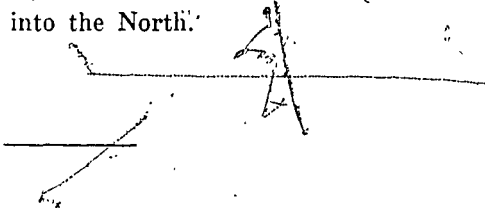
for schools amongst the Indians of the North. As I believed myself reasonably fitted for such work, I offered my services to Dr. Sutherland. I was accepted and appointed to an Indian school on the Rossville Mission, Norway House, Keewatin.

Rossville is the oldest original Methodist Mission in the North West, having been established by Rev. James Evans in 1840, and named after his friend and patron, Chief Factor, Roderick Ross. The Mission was opened by the British Wesleyan Methodist Church. Later when the West began to be settled Rossville passed over to the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Canada. It is now under the United Church of Canada. James Evans' name is forever illustrious through his great invention of the Cree syllabic characters, wonderfully adapted to all the varying sounds of the Cree language, and yet so simple and regular that an average Indian can thereby in a comparatively short time learn to read and write his own language. I know whereof I speak, since during the greater part of my forty-four years of missionary life amongst the tribes of the North this syllabic system has been to me as common as my own English tongue.

My travelling arrangements having been completed, there came the farewells to my brother and family, and to my aged mother, but also to another, Miss Anna J. Young, who in time became my devoted and beloved wife and helpmate for forty-five years, a skillful and efficient nurse, with great practical knowledge, devoted to the welfare of the Indian people, through the years on the Mission wherever our lot was cast. To her I first confided the story of my application for the Indian work. At the Mission Rooms in Toronto I was provided with my transportation to Winnipeg via boat from Owen Sound as far as Port Arthur.

I was fortunate to have as my travelling companion to Winnipeg, Rev. Harper H. Coates; he was on his first journey to Japan; I on my first to the Northern Indian Work. In 1901 I had the pleasure of renewing acquaintance with him when we met in Toronto, both on our first furlough. He passed away a few years ago having devoted the greater part of his ministry to work in Japan.

On my arrival in Winnipeg I was very kindly welcomed by Rev. John Semmens, then Chairman of the Lake Winnipeg District which included all the Indian work of the North. He himself had spent seven years as an Indian Missionary and built the first Church at Nelson House. Through him a family was found who gave me a home until such time as I could begin my journey into the North.



## CHAPTER 2

### I TRAVEL TO THE NORTH

**A**T THAT TIME northern travel had its peculiar difficulties.

During the entire season of navigation the boats made only two trips to Norway House, one in June, the other in September. This infrequent movement of the boats north resulted from the very sparse population then in the country. This population consisted of employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, an odd trader and a few missionaries. Few of these people had any desire or need for much travel. Was not Norway House the very "hub" of their world? The June boat brought sufficient to meet the trade and other supplies for one whole year. Thus to meet the needs of the country frequent boat trips were quite an unnecessary luxury. This, however, made it very difficult and inconvenient for anyone, like myself, who had good reason to travel northward.

In early September, 1890, I was in Winnipeg waiting for the expected craft to set out for Norway House. When? was the question. No one seemed to have the information. If not this week, it might go the next, but if not then, it might the week after. We were daily keeping in touch with the office of the Navigation Company. "No information" was the report on Friday of the second week, but at midnight I was wakened by the call, "Boat leaving early in the morning for Norway House." This was exciting. Selkirk, the port of departure, was 22 miles distant, with no means of travel; no Saturday train, no street car and no bus. Finally, a man with a very common democrat and an ordinary team of horses, undertook to convey me to Selkirk in time for the boat. The road was bad, with deep mud from recent rains. Our travel

was at the proverbial "snail pace," and we were about six hours reaching Selkirk. His charge was "just" \$10.00. After all our haste, night travel and expense, the boat did not leave until the afternoon, and the train from Winnipeg arrived before we left. Our ship was a rather small tug, but boasting a great name *Okemow* (Cree for "Big Chief"). Its performance turned out to be altogether unworthy of such a great name. (It might have been said of this tug as Napoleon is reported to have said to a tipsy soldier, "What's your name?" asked the general. "Napoleon," was the reply. "Change your conduct or change your name," said the General).

Having at length embarked, we passed the twenty miles of the river, and entered Lake Winnipeg. After making, with difficulty, about 15 miles, there arose such a heavy sea that our *Okemow* could not continue any further to face the storm. The captain therefore, decided on a return to the shelter of the river, but in making the turn we had a close call, as our little ship was nearly swamped with a deluge of water which swept her from stem to stern. Huge waves swept over the rail and poured down into our kitchen cabin till everything was afloat.

Reaching the mouth of the river we remained in shelter till Sunday afternoon, when there arrived a big barge-like steamer, the *Red River*, on her return from Grand Rapids. She was supposed, on meeting the *Okemow*, to take on the passengers and freight and turn back for Norway House. This the *Red River* crew absolutely refused to do. As a result both boats returned to Selkirk. I was in time for evening service in the Presbyterian church which was small but well attended and the sermon good.

On Monday the *Red River* went on dry-dock for repairs,

and it became a question which boat would finally be sent out. Captain William Robinson, Manager of the lake shipping, decided that the *Okemow* would again "face the music" and on Wednesday morning we were again on our way down the historic Red River, the *Mikwame Sepe* of the Crees. Whittier's description was certainly very apt as well as poetic for it surely "goes a-winding in and out."

The *Okemow* had seven of a crew and we were five passengers. I remember only one of the crew, the pilot, Adam Black, then fairly well advanced in years, an old lake and river sailor. His special function on this trip was to pilot the boat into Warren's landing at the north end of the lake. Shallow reefs and sand bars with an unmarked course made his work very necessary.

The four passengers, beside myself, were Chief Factor, J. K. McDonald, on his way to take charge of the Oxford House District for the Hudson's Bay Company. With him were his two small boys, Angus and John. The other passenger was a French woman not able to speak any English. She returned to St. Boniface from Warren's Landing.

The Chief Engineer was unwell when he left Selkirk. As the voyage continued he became very much worse and it became evident that there was little hope of recovery. I became very sorry for him and tried to lead him to put his trust in Christ as the great source of comfort and hope, but the poor fellow was weak in mind as well as in body. We learned afterwards that he passed away on the return trip.

This, my first boat experience, occupied two weeks. Much time was spent about islands, where shelter was sought from heavy seas that are common on Lake Winnipeg at that season. Finally our troubles were at an end when our pilot brought us safely through the dangers of the channel, and we

tied up in the shelter of Warren's Landing. We had been eight days from our last leaving of Selkirk, and Norway House was yet twenty miles further on. Warren's Landing, at that time of the year, seemed a dreary place. The day was dark and no one in sight. The season for work was passed and there was nothing to bring men about. The pilot at once went out to hunt up someone to go with him on the twenty mile trip to Norway House. At some distance he found an Indian with a skiff, and they started out to notify the Hudson's Bay Company of the arrival of the boat. Early the following evening quite a party arrived with a York boat and a yacht. The York boat had a crew of nine Indians, fine strong-looking fellows who apparently knew their work. Mr. Belanger, Chief Factor over the Norway House District, was in charge of the party. He was sometimes called the Duke of Cumberland. He was a very portly gentleman, turning the scales at about 300 pounds.

One of the out-going passengers was a Scotchman, Linklater by name, retiring on pension from the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. With him were his native wife and their several children. These have all done well in the new life to which they went, and become worthy Canadian citizens. Another out-going passenger was a young man named Street who had been trading in the North for a Winnipeg firm, Carscadden and Peck.

At the period of which I write, nearly every man engaged in the fur trade of the north country was very favorably disposed to what was designated as "fine old Scotch," and they strangely inclined to cultivate a close acquaintance with this "friend." The unique manner in which the night was spent after the arrival of the Norway House party will illustrate this peculiar "friend." The Chief Factor, Mr. Belanger, had a shake down on the kitchen floor. Mr. Mc-



Donald, the other Factor with his two little boys, occupied the bunk on the right, while the cook and myself were crowded spoon fashion into the bunk on the left. Soon the bottle of Scotch began to travel up and down, back and forth among the three men. There was no light, and apparently the Chief Factor, in the darkness, lost the bottle, and his huge bulk was tumbling around hunting for the lost article. All at once a thought seemed to strike him. There was silence a moment, then came an inquiry, "Where is the preacher?" To this, I answered, "He's here but he would as soon be almost any other place in the world." "Ho, ho" said the man on the floor, and then there was silence.

Next morning we all set out for Norway House. Both Factors now seemed quite sober. They occupied the yacht, while I was with the Indians in the York boat with my supplies. This was my first contact with Indians, and also with Indian dogs. We went ashore on an island where there were about fifty of these, all loose, barking, snarling and jumping about. At that time I did not want too close contact with them. On our arrival at the Fort, Mr. Belanger gave me a very pressing invitation to have lunch with him. Suddenly he shot two questions at me. "Do you take anything?" and "Do you smoke?" When I answered in the negative, he said, "You are on the right track." He seemed to have forgotten the episode of the night before. He sent me over to the Mission with my supplies without any charge from the Landing. He was very kind, frequently sending a train of dogs and a carriage to bring me to visit him, even though he was of the Catholic faith.

---

## CHAPTER 3

### ROSSVILLE MISSION

**S**HORTLY AFTER LUNCH Mr. Belanger very kindly had me taken over to the mission with my outfit by two men with the yacht, and this he did as I have said, without any charge. The distance from the Fort to the Mission is said to be two miles. When about half way over, Rossville Mission came into view. It stood out very clearly, attractive buildings situated on high ground overlooking the lake, and appeared very much better than anything I had imagined Rossville would be like. That was Friday the 25th of September, 1890, just one day less than two weeks since I had set out from Winnipeg, and here I was at the end of all my travelling difficulties and none the worse for it all.

I found Rev. Edward Eves, the Methodist Missionary, in the school, busy teaching as he had been so advised by the Indian Agent, till the expected teacher should arrive. Mr. Eves was bearded and quite grey. This made him look much older than he really was. He was, in fact, not beyond middle life, and proved himself both active and strong, and was also a very good preacher. Mrs. Eves was younger than her husband. They had two young children, Orvid and Gay. Mr. Eves' father and mother occupied the old printing house of James Evans.

Rossville mission had been named in honor of Donald Ross, an old time Chief Factor of the Norway House District, a friend of Mr. Evans and patron of the mission. James Evans' mission work at Norway House continued but six years, yet what wonderful things he accomplished in that

comparatively short time! What a blessing to the Indians has been his wonderful invention of the Cree syllabic characters! Through them, Bibles and hymn books have released their treasures to enlighten and bless the native people.

On Monday morning I entered on my duties as teacher in an Indian school. This certainly was to me a new experience. About 25 children were present. They were of all ages up to 15. A few could understand some English, but none would speak it. I turned them all back to the First book. If they could not speak English it was not their fault but their misfortune. My task was clear. I at once began drilling them in the English language by using many objects, placing them in varied relationships, having the children express in English what that relation was, as: "the pen is in the box," with all sorts of exercises and expressions. The first hour of each day was spent in this drill. This was kept up for months, and such progress was made that business men became surprised at the way the children were understanding English. This was the opening of a new door to many of those native children, and most of them who are living to-day have acquired such a free use of English as even to become interpreters.

At that time the people in general were very poor. This was very evident in the children in their lack of adequate clothing. The girls usually wore two thin print dresses without any underclothing. These dresses remained on for good, for they were worn night and day. The food of the native was chiefly fish, with a portion of bannock. The odor of old fish seemed everywhere, in their homes, on their person, and even invaded the school-room till it could hardly be eliminated.

Poor little kiddies! How little had come into their young

lives to help them on to better things. The inheritance of the past was still strong upon them. Some of them were as wild as deer. Perhaps when they were playing near the woods, and I happened along, they would slip out of sight like little rabbits.

But the passage of the years has brought many changes with improvements. I have seen in later years the native children of Norway House, as they were coming out of school, contending with one another as to which ones would be nearest their teacher to join hands with her. Thus their affectionate dispositions were being developed.

I had been teaching a few days when a mistake occurred which threatened trouble. I had just begun to wear moccasins, and thought they would be fine for a good run. On my return as I approached the mission I noticed in a near-by field one of my school boys with a tall young Indian who was using a bow and arrow. Indians were adepts in this now-lost art. As I ran past these boys I had a sensation as if I had received a severe blow on my right leg just at the top of my moccasin. I staggered and almost fell. I limped over to the fence and called Philip, the school boy, of whom I inquired, "Who did this to me?" Philip replied, "Elijah." Of course, I thought the boy understood me, and I managed to limp home. When I related the circumstance to Mr. Eves he believed I had been purposely hurt. At the close of the service on the following Sunday he mentioned my injury and said, "I regret that such a thing should have been done to one who has given up all his friends and much more to devote himself to the help of the Indian people." No reply, however, was made.

I was so badly hurt that for two weeks I was not able to attend to my school. When I again took up my work it

was with much difficulty that I could walk. Toward spring this charge against Elijah suddenly came to a head. One day at noon as I entered the kitchen I was limping badly. Harriet, Elijah's mother, happened to be washing for Mrs. Eves. "See, Harriet," I said, "What your son did to me." "My son never did such a thing" she replied indignantly. "He never hurt you." All this, of course, was in her own tongue. "Well," said I in Cree, "Some one is lying. Either your son is lying or Philip is." "*Apo kēna*—or you," she angrily retorted. In this incident Harriet was a good example of how well the Indian people can defend themselves against unjust attack. The next day, over came Harriet with the boy Philip and the trouble was soon cleared up. It was altogether a misunderstanding due to the boy's lack of English. He thought I asked him, "Who is that?" and, of course, he replied "Elijah." Everything was now explained, and as we were again going to be friends, I presented Elijah with a Cree Hymn Book and the affair was at an end. At the time of this adjustment I had already acquired quite an understanding of the Cree language.

I now began a search for what had really happened to my leg, and one day an old Indian woman, Janie Halcro, put me on the right track. "That very thing once happened to my husband" she said. "It came through a severe strain on the muscle of his leg with a feeling as if he had been hit." Well that was suggestive, and on further search I found it well explained in a Medical Work. The trouble was caused by the strain of running on my toes, with no support but the soft moccasin, the rupture of the tendon producing the sensation of a heavy blow.

As the boys and girls began to make good progress in their studies, I became very happy among them. I also gave some attention to their play, as they had no idea of any

method in play. One young girl through wild play had her arm broken. I became the doctor for the bone-setting operation, which proved a real success.

My life in the Mission became a very happy one. Mr. Eves had been working on the Cree, but now as we studied and read together it became much more interesting. We often had much amusement over the long Cree words written in syllabic. Sometimes one Cree word would stand for an entire English sentence, and would extend quite a distance across a page in the Cree Bible. This seemed at first very peculiar to us who were just beginning the study of this really wonderful language. I had studied Greek and Latin, but here in the Cree was a living language, one in daily use all around us. As we studied we gradually discovered some of the laws by which the language grew as thought and experience developed among the Indians so that we can trace from one word or root a great many other words growing from the main idea. For example: *Pesim* is the Cree term for sun, the Indian's original time piece for the day, but a new experience came to him when he saw a clock for the first time. By a natural law he related this new time keeper to his old one, his *Pesim*, and the clock became *pesimokan*, an always means imitation, so the clock becomes an imitation of *Pesim* the sun. To get the Cree name for a watch, he adds *iss* to *pesimokan* and it becomes *pesimokaniss*, a little imitation of the sun. Thus his language grows. One more and last example: *O tabab* is to haul; *tab an ask* is a flat sled, *tipee punew* is a turning around as wheels do; thus *tip ee pune tabanask* is Cree for a wagon. Then add the word for fire is *ko tao* to *tab an ask* the word for sled and we have *isk ko ta tab an ask*, the Indian's name for a railroad train. Manitoba is derived from the Cree term *Manitowau pow* Manito, Cree for the Great Spirit was retained, but *wau pow* was translated

into the English equivalent bay and it became *Manitobay*. The *y* was dropped, and thus from a Cree term came the name of our beloved Province, Manitoba.

Toward spring the Mission children began to attend school and proved themselves very apt at their lessons. They were everything to their parents and especially dear to their father. At meal times he always sat with one on each side. Each was very jealous lest some favor should be shown to one and not the other. They were very human in that regard. If the father whispered a little too long to one, the other was much grieved. One day little Gay had an accident and happened to burn her finger and had to have it bound up. This made Gay quite a heroine. While at dinner the father said, looking teasingly at Orvid: "You have no nice burned finger like Gay's." Immediately Orvid's head went down and his little fists were shoved up to his eyes as he began to pout. "What is it Orvid? Is something wrong with you?" said his father. A little after this Orvid too had a burnt finger. He was not going to let his sister get ahead of him. Such simple competition promoted by the father often occurred during meal times. No doubt he felt much for his children, isolated so far in the North from any other white children.

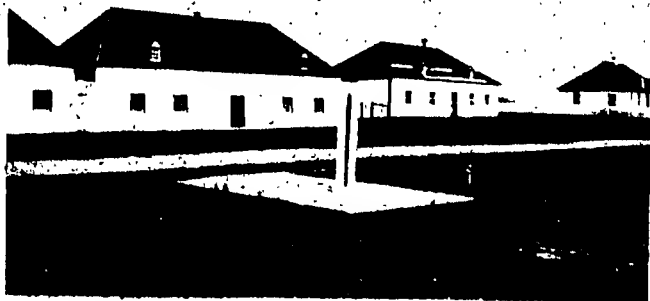
Many evenings were pleasantly spent with his aged father and mother. Supper and devotions being over, the missionary made his way over to spend an hour or so with his father and mother. These visits meant very much to the old people. While the father and son smoked together they related stories of the old life in Ontario. Occasionally I went along and spent an hour with them. One evening on our way over, Mr. Eves said to me "Let us have some fun with father. I will tell a story, and when father says, 'That reminds me,' you jump in with a story, and when he is again about to start, I will come in with another." So we agreed. The old man,

as was his habit, was reclining on a lounge. When the first story was finished, he changed his position and sat up with, "That reminds me." But my story interrupted him and he lay back and listened, then, my story finished, up the old man came again. Immediately the son started another story. "Go on, go on," the old man fairly roared. "Why father!" innocently questioned the son, "Did you want to tell a story, father?" "Go on! go on!" still roared the old gentleman. "What about that time?" suggested the son with some old story. With this clue, the old man could not resist the temptation and he went joyously on with his story. There was one he delighted in telling as a joke on his son. He began, "We went out one day to hunt partridge. My! it was funny. I never saw anything like it," and he laughed so much that his story for a while was held up. Then he continued. "All at once we saw a partridge sitting in a tree, and Edward hauled off and shot at that bird. He could almost have touched it, but did he get it? Not a bit of it. My! it was funny," and the old man again broke into his great laugh, and rubbed his big grey head. "That partridge just flew away as lively as ever but naked, not a feather left on its body but its wings," and we both joined the old man in a hearty laugh.

By the March out-going packet there went forward a Recommendation from the Quarterly Board of the Rossville Church to the Chairman of the Lake Winnipeg District, that I was a "fit and proper person" to become a probationer in the Ministry of the Methodist Church. I was accepted by the Manitoba and North-west Conference in the month of June, 1891. However, I continued teaching the Rossville school.

On the 23rd of May of that year, Mr. Eves left on a visit to the people of Nelson House. He took three men with him,





*Hudson's Bay Company buildings. Sundial  
in foreground put up by Sir John Franklin.*



*"The Little Dancer"-  
Indian woman in old  
style dress.*



*Thomas Ross, wife and  
son of the Cross Lake  
United Church.*



*Dr. and Mrs. Gaudin on the edge of  
White Mud rapids.*



*Mrs. Gaudin, adopted Indian daughter  
Jean, Nelson Gaudin and Indian  
companions around a travelling stove.*



*Dr. Gaudin and an Indian  
bridal party.*



*Mrs. Stout, (centre),  
life-long friend with  
the Gaudins.*

as he was using a large skiff with supplies. One of the three was also to be interpreter. His route was down the Nelson River, across the South end of Split Lake and up the Burntwood River to Nelson House. By that route the distance was not less than 300 miles. In different places he had, even at that date, to contend with ice. He was absent for six weeks, much of the time being occupied in travel. During his absence I was responsible for the affairs of the Mission and the services of the church.

The Sunday after Mr. Eves left, we had a rare treat by having with us the Rev. Edward Paupanekis, native missionary stationed at Oxford House. He had arrived on Saturday, and with him was his son Joseph, then a young fellow, 18 years of age. The missionary occupied the pulpit at both services and gave very profitable and interesting sermons. Norway House was his birth place, as also that of his parents. He was converted during the time of Rev. E. R. Young, and at once he became a Christian worker. At the time Mr. Paupanekis was employed by the Hudson's Bay Company. His winter work was to go around with a train of dogs to the Indian camps to bring in the fur. On these rounds he held services, preaching wherever opportunity offered.

He was finally sent to Nelson House as a lay missionary, where he remained three years. He then returned to Norway House, where he was in charge for a year till the arrival of Mr. Eves. He was ordained in 1889 and stationed at Oxford House.

After six years' efficient work at Oxford House he was appointed to Cross Lake in 1895. After nine years there he was moved to Norway House, his birth place, where he finished his course after eight years of successful service. He had gone to Warren's Landing to hold services, and while

there was suddenly taken seriously ill and in a short time passed away. His end was confidence and peace as he murmured, "I have tried to do my bit." Edward Paupanekis was indeed a credit to his race, a man of strong Christian character, generous to a fault, a native gentleman. Nothing was too good or too much for any guest in his home.

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## CHAPTER 4

### APPOINTED TO NELSON HOUSE

**D**URING THE MONTH of July 1891, the Chairman of the District, Rev. John Semmens, accompanied by Rev. John McDougall, the noted Cree scholar and preacher, were visiting the Missions of the North. Nelson House was among the number. On their return to Norway House, I learned I was appointed to Nelson House. A Miss Swazie, a teacher for the school, arrived from Belleville, Ontario, on the 20th of September, by the last trip for the season of the boat, the old *Red River* of Selkirk.

That left me free to leave for Nelson House as soon as my travelling arrangements could be completed. My personal effects had already been packed in seamless sacks, also my blankets for use on the trip and afterwards as they might be needed. In a travelling outfit the following articles are always necessary: lunchbox, frying-pan, tea-kettle, axe, tent, and gun with ammunition, not forgetting matches. Warm clothing and mittens are very necessary, as also moccasins with warm socks and rubbers to match. Then one is ready for any cold weather that may set in.

I had in advance engaged two men who were to be ready on short notice. Thomas Belton and Sandy McKay were said to be careful and expert canoe men. Their request as to wages was for one dollar per day, to which I readily agreed, though the common wages were only seventy-five cents a day. The men were given the following ration: 4 lbs. flour, 2 lbs. fat bacon, 4 oz. sugar and 2 oz. tea. My men were given rations at this daily rate for two weeks. If this amount

proved too much for one way, a cache was made half way, to be used on the return journey. I had my own lunchbox, with my food already prepared. The men baked their bannock as they had need. This was usually done when camped at night. The preparation of bannock is as follows: A little bacon is cut up and put into the frying pan with as much water as is considered necessary. When hot it is poured into a small hollow made in the flour in the bag. There the flour and water are worked together till the mass is thick enough to be lifted out. More flour is then worked in on the turned down side of the bag, or better on a nice smooth stone. When the bannock dough is thus ready it is patted down in the frying-pan in which it is cooked in front of the fire. It is cooked poorly or well, according to the haste or need of the men. Flour cooked in such a way is called bannock. It is very good when eaten fresh and with bacon. In recent years the men are given baking powder, butter and jam, which is a better method than the old way. During the journey my men were very kind and attentive. This was especially so of Thomas Belton, a fine type of native man, a Christian, and very worthy of trust.

Our course was down the usually travelled branches of the Nelson River. The north-eastern branch of the river widens out into several lakes. The largest of these, before reaching Cross Lake, is the Pipestone. From the soft grayish stones found along its shore the Indians carve ornamented pipes, hence its name. In common with other northern rivers the Nelson abounds in numerous rapids. All have significant Indian names. The first of these the Indian calls *Winnipeg* Bow-stick, as the waters of Lake Winnipeg make their first leap here. To the English people it is known by the translation Sea Falls. Then comes Sugarloaf, a case of lump sugar having been lost in the rapids years ago. The next is

McCalls, where an Indian Agent of that name had an accident and lost most of his effects. Thus the natural features of the country, rapid, river or lake receive their names from the native people sometimes translated but more often corrupted: *Peke ittoon nao* becomes by the English, *Pick-it to nee*, a station on the Hudson's Bay Railroad. *We tusk kee win*, a very expressive Cree word, (a living together in peace, tribal or national peace) becomes changed to *We taska win*, the name of a town in Alberta. Many more instances of such changing of fine meaningful Indian names could be cited, but two cases will suffice.

Cross Lake is at least thirty miles in length and about ten miles in width. I notice its Indian name *Pim-iche gumak* (the river flowing across) which in the Cree tongue has a very definite meaning. On the morning of our third day of travel, we arrived at the Hudson's Bay Company's Cross Lake trading post. The Manager, Mr. H. C. McLeod, was in the fur trade a very capable man. The North at that time continued rich in fur.

Cross Lake had not yet an ordained missionary. A native Indian taught the school and conducted Sunday services. The missionary from Norway House superintended and made a number of visits each year. The Indian Reserve was about sixteen miles square and there belonged to it some 550 Indians, many of whom spent the greater part of the year on their distant trapping grounds.

Continuing on our course we passed a series of rapids. Two of these are worthy of note; the White Mud, a mighty rapid with two main divisions along its great length. This rapid is said to be capable of not less than eight hundred thousand horse power. What waste continues! Bladder Falls is the next of the larger rapids. The Indians tell how one

of the York boat guides lost his life in the swirling currents of this mighty rapid. His duty was to run the three boats through the rapid, a difficult task indeed. The first boat he took through all right. In steering, a long and heavy oar is used and it passes through a large iron ring fastened strongly at the stern of the boat and in which this steering oar is loosely tied. This oar is called the sweep. As the unfortunate guide was running the second boat, a powerful current caught the blade of the sweep with such force that the guide was thrown out into the rolling, heaving rapid. He appeared once, lifted high on the current, then with a wave of his hand he was gone. Nor was his poor body ever recovered. Again, another accident, of which there is no doubt, was reported to me by the Indians. A Scotchman, an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company, had retired from their service; and was on his way home to his native Scotland, there to "lay his bones." He was going out by the York boats to Norway House. At Red Rocks rapid the boat men were hauling the boats up the rapid when in some way the hauling line caught the poor Scotchman and he was thrown into the rapid. His remains were found some time afterwards on the shore of a deep bay. As we passed I could see the glistening of the white stone that marked his last resting place. Thus in the dangers of these rivers and lakes have ended the lives of many brave men. However, through a century and more of travel the portages in this canoe route have become as common as a country road. Even the rocky surfaces are worn by the tramping feet of these portageurs of the North.

We rested over Sunday. We were then about half way through the long lake of Many Vistas, or as the Cree puts it *See-pe-wesk*. We enjoyed the rest, and were all the better fitted for the strain of the hard journey that was yet before



us. We paddled on and soon reached Cross Portage. At this point we were 125 miles from Norway House and were about the same distance from our destination. We now parted from our friend, the Nelson River, which had borne us safely thus far along our way.

Cross Portage is over a mile in extent. With it began the shorter route by lakes, rivers and many long portages (with many deep muskegs) connecting up with different waterways till we finally came out into the Burntwood River, a tributary of the Nelson. In this short cut-off there are eight portages, four of which are in the mile class. Over these long portages, everything had to be carried. It is really a marvel the loads these native men will carry, using a portage strap, and at such a pace. Two hundred pounds is the standard load, but on the shorter portages, sometimes twice that amount is carried. Then on the return they will run nearly all the way, which is characteristic especially of the younger men. Carrying the canoe across, no matter how heavy, is commonly the work of one man. The sail and oars are tied across the thwarts with space enough between so that the weight will rest evenly on each shoulder. When this arrangement is complete, the canoe is turned upside down, then with the help of his comrade he gets the canoe balanced just right on his shoulders, and away he goes.

Believe it or not, the following story is vouched for: Sandy, a young man of Nelson House, carried 900 lbs. of flour a distance of 100 yards, and with 1,000 lbs. stood for five minutes. This was done with the use of a portage strap.

We passed into October before reaching Nelson House. The weather became colder as we continued northward, with occasional flurries of snow. Small rivers began to freeze; one so much so that the men were breaking ice for a couple of

hours before we could reach the Burntwood river. In this river we travelled two days before we reached Nelson House. We passed around a number of large rapids by short portages and paddled against numerous strong currents that required much effort to overcome. We crossed one large lake, Beaver Dam. This lake is high and exposed and thus subject to strong winds. The traveller is lucky if he has calm water in his crossing. As we embarked on it the men warned me that on no account was I to point at a certain island or we might not get safely to the other side. They told me of a certain Okemow, a Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, who pointed at this fateful island and perished in a storm aroused by the wrath of the island spirit. Not being greatly impressed by the sad fate of the unfortunate Okemow, I picked up my paddle saying, as I pointed "Is that the island?" "Oh," exclaimed Thomas, "You have already pointed! Now look out," and he laughed. However, we arrived safely on the other side. Evidently the spirit was losing its power.

We arrived on a Sunday afternoon, our twelfth day of travel. We passed the *Oo-twa hoo win* (an alighting place of wild fowl). There were a few houses, but only one old woman was there. She came to the shore to shake hands with the newcomers. The rest of the people were away fishing. We had yet five miles to reach the Company's post. I was very kindly welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Stout who were in charge, and with whom I was to make my home. None of the native people were about for all were engaged in the fall fishing.


In the evening Isaac Hunter, an elderly Indian, came from where he had been fishing, to meet me, and gave me a very joyous greeting. There was nothing shy about Isaac. He seemed a fine type of Christian native. As the years went

by we came to know him as a very happy old friend. His surname was a tribute to his great ability as a deer and moose hunter.

Mr. and Mrs. Stout were fine Christian people and gave continued support in our work amongst the people. As we were without a church, Mr. Stout very kindly set apart a building for church purposes, and Mrs. Stout did the interpreting. This to her was a service of love, cheerfully and freely rendered. They were both faithful members and supporters of the church. During the nearly two years that I spent in their home we had nothing but continued harmony. Each day was begun and ended with family worship. This certainly was most unique in a Hudson's Bay Company trader's home.

The Stouts had no children of their own, but had adopted a little girl called Bellá. She was the daughter of a Scotch employee of the Company and her mother a superior native Cree woman. Bella was not then three years old, yet she spoke Cree but not English. I became her teacher in English and as she prattled in Cree she helped me in that language.

With the end of October came the final freeze up. In a few nights the ice became strong enough to travel safely on it at pleasure. With the strong ice the fishing came to an end, the people soon returned to their homes. Our services began to be well attended and continued to increase throughout the winter. Old and young were all attentive to the preaching of the Word. I opened an evening school in the house kitchen. Children, young people and even some young married folk were in attendance. One or two of these were bent rather on mischief than on education. This conduct brought reproof and some trouble, but we kept on with the classes.



Sometimes difficult situations were brought before me to be straightened out, such as trouble between a husband and wife. There was no tribunal to which they could bring their difficulties and so they appealed to their missionary. Marriages were usually arranged by the parents or friends rather than by the persons concerned. In the case to which I refer, a young woman of twenty-five years of age had in the past summer been married, against her will, to a man old enough to be her father. As a result she was seeking companionship among young people, and neglecting her home and her old husband. This came to a head one Sunday afternoon and I was requested to speak to Maria about a different life. Mrs. Stout was my interpreter and some married people remained to hear. Isaac the husband was of course, present, and all were waiting for the words that I trusted would be given to me. When I began to speak Maria's face was adamant, but as I continued to speak kindly to her, her face softened and finally she broke down and burst into tears. She then, of herself, promised to do her best in her home and to her husband. Maria kept her word and a change for the better gradually became evident in her life.

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## MY FIRST WINTER JOURNEY

**W**INTER TRAVEL in the North by dogs has been the custom from time immemorial. In fact it was the only way of winter travel in those great old days. For years, even in my time, horses were considered impossible. In the intense cold of the North, they could not work and exist; then dogs for common travel are twice as fast.

A few days after Christmas 1891 a Nelson House party set out for Norway House a distance by winter trail of 200 miles. We were seven in the party with four trains of dogs. A train usually consists of five dogs. Mr. Stout and myself had each a train and a carriage and a driver. Mr. Stout's was John Angus Donkey. Mine was Willie Mistick. Murdo Spence and Donald McRae, a Scotch servant, had each a train of dogs with long toboggan-like oak sleds. David Flet was the "fore-goer". His work was to go ahead of the dogs on snow shoes, to break trail. Except on hard trails the fore-goer is very necessary. The purpose of this trip was three-fold: first, to be at Norway House when the mail packet should arrive from Winnipeg, second, to visit, and third, to bring back necessary supplies. At this date of writing (1940) only three of this party survive, John Angus, Murdo Spence and myself.

Mr. Stout and myself were supposed to ride comfortably in our carriages as real *Okemows*, but that was not our luck. By mid-day we came to such deep snow that David was no longer able to break trail alone. There was then nothing else for us to do but put our two drivers ahead with David that

three pair of snow-shoes might crush down the snow into a better trail. This meant that we had to crawl out of our comfortable carriages to drive our own dogs. Mr. Stout was no new hand at the job and his dogs soon became aware of it, but as a dog driver, in that first attempt, I was what the Indians term *Mo nee ass* (a man from Ontario, a greenhorn). I tried to do my best but my performance was not quite satisfactory to my good friend Mr. Stout. It is said "Practice makes perfect." This old adage well applies to the fine art of dog-driving and in course of time I won the distinguished order of the North, D.D., "Dog Driver", for I was more or less at it for forty years. For the greater part of three days we waded through this deep snow, when suddenly we struck a beaten trail and our hard work was at an end. For this trail we were indebted to the Cross Lake trappers as they had been going back and forth over their trap lines. Our rate of travel was at once quickened, the dogs now going at a joyous rate as they felt the beaten trail beneath their feet. As our drivers were now free we again took our places in our carriages and went on in comfort for the remainder of the run to Norway House. We arrived at Cross Lake by the evening of the fourth day and remained over night at the Hudson's Bay post and were royally entertained. Our dogs were regaled on fine white fish, the largest to be found anywhere. The next day we trotted the sixty miles to Norway House in ten hours, including two fires for drinking tea. Mr. Stout and I were riding but the other men were running all the time.

I enjoyed very much my visit in the Eves' home over Sunday, and was given the opportunity of again bringing the message to the native people of Norway House. The only word in Cree for the Gospel is just what it means, *Me you ahee mo win*—Good News. About the middle of the

week we started on the return trip. There happened to be at that time an epidemic of la grippe. McRae and John Angus became infected and by the time we reached Cross Lake, they were both quite ill. After waiting impatiently for a day, Mr. Stout urged that we move. McRae though very sick was driving his dogs. I was driving mine and for a time took John Angus in carriole wrapping him up well, but early in the afternoon, he began to walk again, and continued till he reached home. From Norway House we had an addition to our party, Alex Belanger, a young fellow, son of the Chief Factor. We learned that he was being sent down by his father to be under my tuition at Nelson House. Day after day we travelled slowly along on account of the two sick men, camping early to have daylight in making camp.

This is made in the following manner: With the snow-shoes as shovels the snow is removed from a space sufficient in size for the number in the party. Around this space on three sides is built a protection with small spruce trees crossed at the corners. The space cleared from snow is covered thickly with soft spruce boughs stripped off from small trees. In the meantime some have been cutting and bringing a liberal supply of dry wood, and soon a big fire is built across the open space in front of the camp. This is for warmth, cooking, and thawing dog fish, and also for light. The sleeping robes of eider-down, rabbit skin, or heavy blankets are brought in and placed at the back of the camp ready for use, each one looking after his own. The dogs being fed and supper over, come devotions. Nearly all are Christian and unite quite heartily in the singing. The hymn may be a Cree translation of "Sun of My Soul—*Net ah chack oo pesim oma*. Then each one wraps himself in his blanket, and soon silence settles down on the camp, while the stars and Northern Lights shed down their calm light upon us.

While there was yet more than a day's travel before us, we were met by two Nelson House men, Abraham Wood and Felix Moody, the latter a servant of the H.B. Company. He had become anxious about us as we were long overdue. As they had a good fresh train of dogs, they greatly hastened our arrival and soon the exertion of the trail was exchanged for the warmth and comfort of home life.

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## CHAPTER 6

### WORKING TOWARD NEW CHURCH

**B**UILDING at Nelson House in 1892 had many difficulties. Tenders were out of the question as distances in the North made such a method impossible. We therefore were forced to direct our own building operations, but the work had to be done by native assistants.

As I had not yet received a grant from the Missionary Board, I proposed to raise as much as I could locally, thus helping out in funds for the new church. We raised \$50. and also the promise, by the Indians, of free work. As men could not work without food and as the Nelson House store could not supply any, a journey to Norway House became necessary as only there could we obtain the needed provisions.

For the trip I would require two men and the use of two trains of dogs. Mr. Stout supplied the dogs, charging only \$10. I engaged Tommy Linklater and Angus Donkey. Tommy was young and strong, Angus had already passed the prime of life, but hired to go ahead of the dogs. Tommy drove a good strong train, but the dogs I drove were both strong and fast. This put me in the lead throughout the entire trip. Old Angus stuck to his job, but he was a tired man by the time we reached Norway House having made the 200 mile run in four days. However, Indian-like he would not acknowledge it.

Though it was well past the middle of March with its long days, we were off on the trail with the first dawn. The nights continued cold but the days were beautiful and clear and we made great time. We fed our dogs well and they

kept in fine condition. "Hello boys," I would call, "It is coming daylight," and soon a good fire was blazing, the tea-kettle boiling the bacon sizzling and shortly we were eating. Our faithful dogs were also on the alert and with their heads turned to one side they sat up blinking at the glare of the fire. When through breakfast we were ready for hitching up, but we must begin the day right, and we united in a hymn and then offered a prayer mostly in Cree. Then quickly the sleds were tied up, the dogs harnessed and hitched and we were off at a good fast clip. We spent our third night inside at Cross Lake. The sun was up when we made our next morning start. "Oh! not soon enough," said the men in Cree, but we were off for the sixty mile run to Norway House and we made it before sunset. These were dogs and we were "men". Old Angus had run ~~all~~ the way and though his knees were swollen, he would not give in but had one word to say, "I am not tired," and he finished on the trot.

On the way we met two men with a train of dogs on their way to Nelson House carrying freight and mail. As we met out on the lake they handed me a package of letters which had come out to Norway House by the March packet, the first since Christmas. For this favor we were for years indebted to the Hudson's Bay Company who in their packets carried letters for all missionaries and others living in the North.

A month before I received my letters two men each with a train of dogs, had left Norway House taking out letters from the entire North, travelling over the stormy wastes of Lake Winnipeg till they reached the Lower Fort Garry, from where they returned with mail for the officers and servants of the great Company, and also, as I have said, for all others of the north country. And there I was with my parcel of



letters. I sat in the carriole, letting my dogs follow on at their own sweet will while I fairly devoured the contents of those letters from dear ones and friends from whom I was separated by great distances. Here on my course over a twenty mile lake reading the words and enjoying the thoughts of those so far away I had fellowship with them through the written page. Then after this there would be another long silence of three or four months. No radio then, no telegraph, no planes, nor Hudson's Bay Railway. Nothing but long stretches of frozen lakes, rivers, woods and muskegs, with a few traders and missionaries scattered through those wilds separated by long miles. But our Indians needed us, and the loving Father brooded over it all, and so we stayed doing our little part in carrying out the Great Commission—"Go Ye" and were happy in the doing.

After a pleasant visit for a few days over Sunday, we began preparations for our return. I obtained from the Company the needed supplies, flour, bacon, tea and sugar as much as we could freight back, in addition to fish for our dogs. As the days were warm we travelled at night by the light of the stars and the great Northern Lights. As we came through the woods into the entrance to Cross Lake rain began to fall. That meant that a thaw was on. After one hour's travel in the lake we camped on a high island as the snow was already filling with water and becoming slushy. In the afternoon Mr. McLeod, having cached his load in the woods, passed with an empty sled. We followed him splashing through the water now quite deep all over the lake. As we were wearing only moccasins our feet were soon well soaked. We continued like that for about ten miles when we reached the Hudson's Bay. We soon changed into dry footwear and were none the worse for our cold foot bath. Next day it became cold again and began to freeze. Toward evening we again took up the line

of our march. We had miles of lake before entering a portage. We frequently broke through the ice crust into the unfrozen water underneath. On reaching the portage we made a fire, changed again into dry foot-wear, had a lunch and continued on our way, travelling by night and sleeping during the day.

Thus we went happily along, and forgot the little troubles we had just come through, for that is the spirit of the North Land. All had relation to our hopes and plans for a new church at Nelson House, and so we hastened along, running or walking, according to the speed of the dogs, sometimes through wet and slush, but ever glad and hopeful, well and strong, able to meet the toil and stress, the rough and tumble that even missionary life, at that time, called for in the great North Land.

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## PREPARING MATERIAL FOR CHURCH

IT IS A FAR CRY from the building methods of 1892 to those of 1938. During my fifteen years at Nelson House the old methods still prevailed. All building material had to be prepared by hand, and that often by poor workmen. Forest fires had so destroyed near-by timber that logs for building or for lumber could be found only many miles distant. All logs had to be hewed on both sides. Then the hewed logs were brought home by York boat with a crew of nine men. Then for lumber the logs were cut by man power using the old pit-saw. Two men sawing could not average more than 80 square feet a day. Then there was drying, straight edging, planing and grooving before the lumber was ready to be used in a building.

A short time after my return from Norway House, a few men gathered to give free work cutting and hewing logs. It was my first experience with Indians at such work. With one exception they were very poor workmen. Their aim seemed to be, not how much work they could do, but rather how much flour, bacon, and tea they could dispose of and also how often they could smoke. That was the way it appeared to me, and by the end of the week I returned home very much disappointed and discouraged.

The trouble with these men was that they were at new work which was out of line with all their past experience. They were industrious as hunters, trappers and trippers, but this log-hewing was out of their line till a new training experience came to them. Till then they acted lazy. I did

not think of these principles at the time, I was too annoyed, but they came to me afterwards. That is often the case with those Indians who are called lazy. It is not fully realized that an effort is made to change the Indian too quickly from his old way of livelihood, in which he excelled, to something new, such as work in which he has had neither interest nor experience. This would be something like taking a person who all his life had been in a store or office and setting him to work digging ditches. Such a one would, if possible, soon forsake the ditches and return to his former employment. Among those working at the logs, there was one outstanding man very different from the others. He had never been a trapper but a worker and a tripper. He had worked for the H.B. Company and assisted in their building operations, as had also his father before him. As a result Murdo Spence was an industrious and capable axe-man. In the course of a few years a very marked change took place in one of the lazy fellows. Having become a Christian he began to build a house near the Mission. He was now interested in his work and was like a new man. He worked early and late. Across the lake he set a net to have food while he worked. He carried the hewn logs on his shoulders out of the woods. Thus, by his own unaided efforts he had a nice little house, warm and comfortable for his wife and children. His chief purpose in building was to be near the church and the school for his children. Thus, Murdo Hart became greatly changed and thereby much more of a man.

Finally a quantity of material had been prepared for the body of the church. Then with open water it was brought by York boats to the site for the church. For this work no wages were paid, only rations were given. But before the church could be completed there was a great deal of work to be done. As no Nelson House man was fitted for the final

work, I made arrangements with Thomas Belton of Norway House to undertake the work. He arrived in April 1893 bringing with him Charles Paul as his assistant. They proved good men, interested in the work they had come to do.

The material had been landed over near the Hudson's Bay Company place where we had intended to have the church. Regarding this position the "*O twa hoo win*" people became very much dissatisfied, as it would mean for them a five mile journey to attend church, while the people about the fort would have the church almost at their doors. To settle the question I called a council of all the people, and Poplar Point was chosen which was as nearly half way as possible. Next morning the men gathered and with two York boats moved all the material to the new site. In a few days another gang set to work to clear up the place, cutting away the thick growth of poplar. About three acres was thus well cleared and here on this high flat spot the church was built. It was visible from every part of the lake. Early in July the church was so far completed as to be ready for opening before the men left for their homes. We had a great first service with a full congregation of glad people. The building was 30' x 20' with three large windows to each side, good roof with matched lumber clap boarded. It had a good floor, raised platform, altar rail and neatly-made pulpit. The seats I made myself, but the one the Company's people occupied was made and painted by Mr. Stout. Poplar Point was for some years a rather solitary place with our nearest neighbor two miles distant.

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## CHAPTER 8

### EPIDEMIC AT NELSON HOUSE

**I**N THE SUMMER of 1938 the Nelson House boatmen, returning from Norway House, went ashore to visit the Cross Lake people though it was well known that a bad type of measles had broken out among the people there. Mr. Stout had warned the men of their danger in so doing, but his warning had no effect. How could they pass by their friends in need and leave them unnoticed?

On the arrival of the boats one of the men was already a victim of the epidemic. Soon the boats left on the second trip, this time only as far as Cross Lake. When about three days from their destination, all but two men of the three brigades went down under the attack of the disorder. The two men went to work to minister to their sick comrades. The large boat covers and sails were utilized to make a protection for the sick. Their provisions were about exhausted but there was fish in the river, on the banks of which they were camped. They had, however, neither net, hooks nor lines, but they were not to be defeated. From nails they made hooks, sharpening them with files. They made lines from threads pulled out of heavy sacking. These threads they put together and twisted them into fairly strong lines. With these primitive tools they hooked as many jackfish as they could dispose of. Under the conditions the sick were in, it is a wonder they all recovered. As they began to improve, they tried out the Jacks, thus gaining strength. One day to their great joy a canoe with three men came in sight and landed. The men were from Norway House on their way to Nelson House. One, a white man, was going there as a house-builder.



Men of the North spare no pains to help others unfortunately stranded. The canoe with all haste returned to Cross Lake, and in a few days was back with an abundant supply of food for the needy boatmen so long without nourishing food. The carpenter and his men, happy in the pleasure that a good deed brings, continued on their way to Nelson House. When the recovered men had a few good meals, they began to move slowly along for Cross Lake. There they loaded up and in due time arrived safely, their boat work at an end for that season.

On my return from a visit to the people of Split Lake, I found the measles had been making inroads among the people, and there had been a number of deaths. In one family some distance away the mother and daughter had died. When we came to the *O tua hoo win*, I went ashore. Here was a pitiful sight. On the location of a lately removed tepee, a blind old woman was keeping guard over the body of another old woman who had just fallen a victim to the disease that proved so fatal to our Indian people. Mothers with their babes and little children were all down at the same time, and the lack of care resulted in the death of nearly all the smaller children. The poor people were dazed in their distressed and helpless condition. To secure doctor or nurse was out of the question. Had Mrs. Gaudin been available, no doubt many lives would have been saved. As it was, there were at least fifty deaths.

One poor old man, Friday by name, had been for years fisherman for the Company. No one noticed that Friday had gone to his nets with the measles out on him. The next day hearing the old man complaining of being cold, I supplied him with a thick quilt that in his tent he might be a little warmer, but the first news in the morning was "Old Friday is dead." There in his little tent lay the poor old body with

a dozen dogs huddled around seeking shelter and warmth. Old Friday had passed during the night to the light of that Land where sickness, pain, poverty and death have forever passed away. "And there shall be no night there."

After some weeks, the epidemic having spent itself, the people began to get back to normal. The hunters obtained their usual debts for winter use and with their families, their sons and sons-in-law, took to their canoes, with all their belongings for their distant trapping grounds. Mothers went with their arms empty and their hearts sore, for their babies and little children were lying in their last long sleep in the little God's acre on the hill overlooking the Mission. Thus passed a sad chapter in the life of our Nelson House people.

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## CHAPTER.9

### A WINTER JOURNEY TO WINNIPEG, 1893

**T**O MAKE A TRIP with dogs over the 200 miles from Nelson House to Norway House, then on to Winnipeg over the 400 miles of Lake Winnipeg's long shore line is no easy task. Then after a few days in the city, to return over the same trail in the same way, during the coldest time of a Northern Winter with temperatures ranging from 25 to 50 degrees below zero is equally difficult. Just such a journey I took during January and February 1893, in order to receive special ordination to the Christian ministry. This was under direction of Rev. John Semmens, Chairman of the Lake Winnipeg District, and that year President of the Manitoba and North West Conference.

On this journey I had with me two faithful natives of Norway House, my old friend Thomas Belton, and Thomas Balfour. Each had a train of dogs. There was a carriage for my comfort and a flat sled for baggage, lunch box, and fish for the dogs. We were in company with the two men on the packet trip for the Hudson's Bay Company. We spent our first night near Warren's Landing in the home of a native, George Frobisher. Throughout the North any traveller is given a welcome for the night in any native home without any charge, recompense being solely at the discretion of the traveller himself. Before retiring for the night, the father gathered his children about him, all uniting in a Cree prayer which he had taught them. No wonder his children became Christian men and women. After two nights camping out we reached Berens River on the morning of our fourth day. Mr. and Mrs. McLachlin welcomed us gladly to

their home. As it was Sunday I preached at both services, in the morning through the interpreter, but in the afternoon, at Mr. McLachlin's request, I spoke in Cree from 1 Cor. 13, "And now abideth faith, hope and love," etc. I was glad to be able to do this after little more than two years among the Cree people. I enjoyed every moment of my short visit with the McLachlins. Lena their only child was a lively little girl not yet in her teens. She afterwards became the wife of a minister living in Toronto. Mr. McLachlin, unfortunately, was drowned in Lake Winnipeg in the fall of 1901. His untimely death was a great loss to our Indian work. His body rests in the little cemetery at Berens River with many of those for whose spiritual welfare he had labored. A few years ago Mrs. McLachlin passed away in the home of her daughter. With Mr. McLachlin were his guide and six native children. All drowned from a sailboat during a very high wind on Lake Winnipeg. He was a clever sailor and a man of great courage. This possibly led him to risk too much.

We left the Mission, Monday forenoon. We crossed over a long portage and came down into an almost enclosed part of the Lake but over which a storm was sweeping. We were forced to take refuge in a nearby shack, this time that of a white man and his native wife, the Gull. Here we remained for the night. Next morning we started out, though the cold was intense. Before we reached the shelter of the woods both my men had their faces frozen. Each rubbed the other's face with snow and took it all with a laugh. The Indian rarely complains but meets the hard places with the best of humor. With the dropping of the wind travelling became more pleasant with an increase in our pace, and we slept that night at what was called the Mill. We were then with three travellers, all Hudson's Bay men. Two were those carrying the packet. Leaving in the early morning we passed

Humbag Bay to our right, the Bay where the bodies of the McLachlin party were found. After a run of twenty miles we had lunch, "drinking tea" at Darcy's, a man of French descent, married to a native woman. They had one daughter and a number of grown sons. When night came we found shelter in an Icelandic home, where we were very kindly received, and were given a room for the night, the charge being very reasonable. We reached Selkirk the next evening and continued on our way the next morning. When about half way to Winnipeg the men felt hungry, and we went toward a house fairly near the road. One of the men was carrying the lunch box and I led the way. When we got near, a man appeared at the door and motioned us away. "We need only hot water and warmth," I explained, but to no avail. "This is funny," said the men, "Not much like our country." Our friend however, directed us to a stopping place which we found to be very homey and we were all royally entertained with the very best, and that "without money and without price". "A minister is never charged in this house," was her kind attitude. She has long since passed away, but the memory of her kindness to wayfarers has been cherished throughout the years. We arrived in Winnipeg in the early afternoon and drove our dogs through the city streets till we reached the home of Mr. Semmens. Thomas Belton walked ahead of the dogs and they followed him closely regardless of the traffic on the streets.

The ordination service held in Grace Church, was under the auspices of the Young People's Societies of the Methodist Churches of Winnipeg. Grace church was filled to capacity. Rev. John Semmens, President of the Conference, conducted the service. Rev. G. R. Turk, pastor of the Church, was intensely interested in the young Indian missionary, also in the two native guides. He would have been greatly delighted

if our dogs could have been brought to the church. The two Thomases were seated in front where they could observe well the first ordination service they had ever seen. They were very gratified when, at the close of the service, kind friends placed many gifts of money in their hands. I wore new deerskin moccasins finely ornamented with Indian silk work. Thus I was something of a curiosity. After I had given my Christian experience, I was requested to tell something of the work in the North. At the close of the service a great many came forward with greetings and good wishes. Among these friends were several former school mates from old Grey County in Ontario. As I recall that experience a peculiar feeling comes over me. I think of the men who were prominent in that service. The years, as a flood, have carried them away. They finished their course and passed on to their places in the great congregation beyond.

Our stay in Winnipeg was short. The men were impatient to be on the trail northward. Then there was the feeding of eight ravenous sleigh dogs which in Winnipeg was no small expense. All this hastened our going. We again travelled with our old Norway House Packet men. As we were also loaded we easily kept together. We finally reached Warren's Landing and then went on by way of the river and portage to Norway House and Rossville Mission. We had been almost a month absent. I had walked the greater part of the return journey and arrived at the Mission quite ready for a rest, and there were still before me 200 miles to Nelson House. All this travel was commonplace to the native trippers. They seemed indifferent to the extreme cold of winter or the heat of summer with its hosts of ravenous mosquitoes and black-flies. Hard portages with heavy loads and dangerous rapids have been the common life of the Indian during the generations of the past.

After some days rest, we started out for Nelson House, a short journey of 200 miles. I had left there about two months before. During my absence Sandy Hartie, a native local preacher, had been continuing the services.

In addition to the two men who had been with me on the Winnipeg journey, I engaged a third man, Thomas Monias. I now had three of the same name and I only had to call, Thomas, and the whole three came to attention. We had three sleds, (one the carriole), all loaded, chiefly with bales of clothing which had been sent out during the preceding summer by some Woman's Missionary Society and we were now taking them in to help some of the needy Nelson House Indians. On this journey Sunday came and we continued on our way. This was common to all travellers, including missionaries on winter trails. Sunday then became as the other days of the week. My third man had his traps with him, and set them on that day wherever he saw tracks of fur animals. This was not the case with Thomas Belton, but we had on Sunday the misfortune to have a break in our *taben ask* (sled) and, of course, we had to get out some tools to mend the break, and there I was taking part in all this on a sacred day. I who at one time in my life thought it terrible for one even to whistle on Sunday. If, however, it is right to travel on Sunday, then all work made necessary by such travel may be considered allowable. To prepare food, fires have to be made, and in this and in making camp an axe has to be used.

In this connection a curious story suggests itself. It was related to me by a surveyor: "I was working," he said, "on the plains out West. In my employ were natives from John McDougall's Morley Mission. As the fall season came on, in order to complete my contract, I was forced to work on Sunday. I noticed that, on Sunday the Morley Indians did not

use an axe, but broke off dry sticks when making a fire. I asked them the reason for this. They replied, 'John tells us not to use an axe on Sunday'. At first I thought McDougall's teaching very childish but after a while I decided it was good advice for such men as these natives, for if one could get them to refrain from the use of an axe on Sunday it would save them from much Sabbath desecration."

We arrived at Nelson House on the seventh day of our journey and I received a very hearty welcome. The next day the three men turned their faces toward their homes at Norway House.

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## CHAPTER 10

### I VISIT SPLIT LAKE

**I**N THE MONTH of March, 1893, I received an urgent request from John Kichekeesik (Great Sky), a leader of the Split Lake Indians, that I should visit them as soon as convenient. These people some years before had moved from around York factory to a new district with Split Lake as a centre. They were Anglicans, but since their move they had been without a missionary from their own Church. This request was sent after they had heard of my ordination. To make this visit I engaged two good men, Murdo Hart and a younger man, Henry Spence, each with a train of dogs. The usual preparation was made; rations, frying pan, matches, and two axes. Each man provided his own blankets or robes for comfort in sleeping in cold shacks or outside. Fish for the dogs had to be taken along, 100 for four nights.

This visit occupied twelve days, eight spent on the trail, leaving four for work. A service was held each day with three on Sunday. Children were baptized, Holy Communion administered, and young people married. On one occasion during a marriage ceremony, another woman stood up claiming, "This man should marry me", but as the bridegroom denied her claim the ceremony proceeded. As Split Lake had no church, the Hudson's Bay Company placed a building at our disposal, and also very kindly entertained me during my visit. The people seemed to enjoy my visit, especially as I could give them the message in their own tongue, and we had a great time together in several fine services.

The night before starting on the homeward trail I spent with the men in what was called the men's house so, being

together, we could get away early. A native family was also occupying the same house. Early in the morning I was awakened by the cry of a new-born infant that had arrived while we slept, completely unaware of the wonderful event that was happening. The stork certainly arrived in the nick of time and before leaving I had the pleasure of baptizing the new baby. The parents were very pleased for they value very highly this Sacrament of the Church. By this unexpected service our leaving was delayed for a while, but we made up for it and arrived home on schedule time.

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## CHAPTER 11

### A VISIT OUT IN 1894

**S**HORTLY AFTER the Christmas celebration, 1893, I left Nelson House along with the Company's trains for Norway House. I had my own outfit of five dogs and a carriole. The weather was not too cold, not more than 40 below zero, and we arrived at Norway House on our fifth day. I was a guest of the Company, and was there at the time of their New Year's celebrations. As was the regular custom at that season all their traders from the extended Norway House District gathered for the New Year, and in their own peculiar way celebrated. For this I was not present as I attended the Watch Night service in the Rossville church, and on return to the Fort found the event in full swing. As the special enjoyment was not in my line, I retired to my room to rest. All at once loud angry voices, sounded from below, as if a row were in progress, then lower voices, as if trying to make peace. They finally succeeded in getting one of the disputants to his room, which happened to be next to mine. Imagine my surprise to hear him make a lengthy Cree prayer. This seemed very much like living in two ways, one in the Cree, religious, but the very opposite in English in language and conduct. This man had some Indian blood in his veins.

Before leaving for Winnipeg and the East I disposed of my four dogs and harness for \$32.50. As two trains of dogs from the Rossville Mission were going into Winnipeg for supplies, it was arranged that I should make the journey with them. The travel was hard on both men and dogs, and two of these faithful but severely-treated animals died on the return trip. In due time I passed through Winnipeg, and

arrived in Ontario, where I gave addresses in several churches. One of these was the Thornbury church, in which some years before I had been a member. It was a pleasure to relate to many old friends the story of our work amongst the Indians of the North Land.

In Thornbury I stayed for a few days in the home of an Aunt, a Mrs. Hurlburt, my father's sister, and known to many as Aunt Tillie. After my address, as we were returning from the church, Aunt Tillie faintly said, "My boy, I was praying for you, but, after all, I really don't think you needed it." Dear Aunt Tillie! a great Christian, a real saint of God. She was loved and respected by all. She has long since passed into the presence of Him she loved so well.

After addresses in other churches as I passed through Ontario I finally arrived at my brother's home near Port Washington, Long Island. Here also was my mother, the best mother any son could have had. I am very glad I was always to her "My dear boy" and when years afterwards she passed peacefully away in our Cross Lake mission home, the last words I heard were still the same as ever, "My dear boy." But there was another who in the next year came to Norway House to become my beloved wife and fellow worker. How wonderfully I have been blest! a mother who devoted herself, for years, to the care of her boy during his time of lameness, and now another who for mutual love was gladly willing to go with me to the very ends of the earth, to share with me isolation, 700 miles from the kind of life to which she had been accustomed, with no doctor nearer than those long miles, with mail at the most not more than four times in the entire year and then only letters, with no radio, no telegraph. Visitors were indeed novelties: only four in eleven years.

Our marriage was arranged to take place at Norway House

in the following June, 1895, and all too soon farewells were said, as I had to reach Selkirk in time for the boat for Norway House. The old *Red River* was loaded to its utmost capacity, as it carried a year's supply for the North, chiefly for the Hudson's Bay Company, but also for the few traders and missionaries then in the North.

At Norway House I hastened preparation for pushing on to Nelson House. Thomas Belton, my old standby, was again with me, also a younger man, John George Moar, who was good in a canoe and a trusty worker. Our craft was the humble birch-bark which, however served our purpose, fully as well as its royal brother, the Peterborough. These men were not only taking me down but were to remain as master builders of a new house, the first to be built at our Poplar Point Mission.

To gather and prepare material for a house was very much as it was in the case of the church. Logs for building and for lumber were to be found only at considerable distances. On one occasion I went with a number of men to cut and to hew logs for lumber. We went about fifteen miles up the Burntwood River, where we prepared 100 logs. These we made into two rafts which we ran down the river over some rapids, and then followed the current to the "*O twa hoo win*" within three miles, up stream, of the Mission. From there the logs were brought the remaining distance by two York Boats. Then the logs were ripped into boards by the slow process of the old pit-saw method. This is but one instance of the hard, slow labor involved, at that time, in building.

This first Mission house was built of hewn logs notched at the corners, the spaces between the logs being filled with moss. The roof was made of poles covered with a mud mor-

tar worked into grass with which the spaces were filled. The Indians term this grass filled with mud, suckers *Num a pin uk*. The whole surface is then covered with a special mud which is dug up down near the shore. It is whiter than the common mud. It is prepared by the Indians tramping it till well mixed, hot water having first been poured on. After the roof is covered with this prepared plaster it is washed and rewashed with a mud solution till all the cracks are filled and all is made quite smooth. The roof is then shingled with spruce bark removed from the trees in lengths of about four feet and put on in double tiers, the whole battened down tightly with flattened poles pinned or nailed.

The two carpenters were engaged in this work for six weeks and finished a small house with a lean-to kitchen, with floors, windows and doors. At the same time two Nelson House men were engaged in sawing lumber, and two others were doing the rougher work in connection with the house building.

While the men were working at the house rather a peculiar incident happened. We all slept and ate in the church, as at the Mission there was no other building available. I myself slept on two church seats turned together, while four of the men slept in a corner near the door. Now it happened that an old native died, and as his body could not remain in a tent, it was brought into the church and placed on the platform in front of the pulpit near the wall. At this, all the men vacated the church, but I remained in my usual bed on the seats a short distance from the pulpit, while old Moody slept his last sleep on the other side and neither molested the sleep of the other. After the funeral the men returned to their quarters in the church and everything went on as usual.

## CHAPTER 12

### A HAPPY JOURNEY

JUNE 10, 1895, was a very great day in my life, as I was leaving Nelson House for Norway House, there to meet the one who was to be everything to me. I had four men with me in two honest birch bark canoes. The men were eager, for they understood something of the importance of this trip on which they were embarking. Great interest was manifest among the people, for was there not coming the very first *I-yum e hay weke mas kwao* (Missionary lady wife) to be seen at Nelson House? "Just think, she is coming from her far away land and she will not only come but she will stay with us here in our land (*tab way mam mis kach*). It is truly wonderful! I wonder if she will love us?" said some of the women.

We were off on our way early Monday morning and were soon moving swiftly along with the strong currents of the Burntwood River with its numerous rapids. We portaged around the impossible ones, but ran the less dangerous, joyously swinging our paddles to the rhythm of united movement, now and again breaking into a verse of one of our musical Cree hymns. "Safety first" is a principle nowhere better observed than by these clever but careful native canoe men. Before running a difficult rapid they first carefully examine its condition (which varies with the different heights of the water). They then decide as to how it must be run, and no mistake is ever made. We arrived at Cross Lake Mission early on Saturday, remaining over Sunday with the Newtons, taking for them both services.

As the church was not completed we met in the school house and had a good time. Monday afternoon we were again on our way. The Newtons were travelling with us. They were moving to Norway House to be in charge of the river school and services there. As Mr. Newton was without a canoe man, I loaned him Angus, and took the vacated place in our canoe. I took Mrs. Newton in with us, as she had been lying down in the bottom of their small canoe, and I feared an accident. The following afternoon we arrived at Norway House. The next day I went with my men out into Playgreen Lake to watch for the *Red River*, on which Miss Young would be. We slept on an island and very early in the morning, to our great joy, we discerned in the distance the outline of the boat, which miraged to immense proportions. After a hasty breakfast, taking to our canoes we paddled toward it. There was no disappointment for Anna was the first one I saw. Rev. John Semmens was also on board. That was very important, as he was to perform our marriage ceremony.

Another noted passenger was Rev. J. Newnham, Bishop of Moosenee, on his way to visit his distant diocese. As the *Red River* was fast on a sandbar I took Anna off in the canoe, and away we went for Norway House, our two canoe men feeling like conquering heroes as they drove their canoe across the lake in a very distinguished manner. We arrived at the Hudson's Bay Company in a couple of hours, and were very heartily welcomed by Mrs. McDonald, wife of the Chief Factor in charge, Mr. J. K. McDonald. Next day the *Red River* arrived, and with it Mr. Semmens and the Bishop. Saturday, June 22nd, 1895, was our wedding day. It was a beautiful day. The ceremony was performed over at the Rossville Mission in the Methodist church. The Bishop conveyed the bride over in his Peterborough canoe and also took



part in the ceremony. It happened to be the anniversary of the Bishop's own wedding. Some wild flowers, gathered by Mr. Semmens and tied with a printed ribbon formed the bride's bouquet. This after all was in harmony with the North land. The bride was very beautiful in her wedding gown. It had all been prepared in New Jersey seven months before. The wedding dinner at the Fort was very fitting. Everyone was kind. The special cake was donated by the boat's cook. Everything passed off very nicely.

On Sunday afternoon, Bishop Newnham held a service at the Fort. His subject was "Excuses for rejection of the invitation to the great supper." The Bishop's sermon was very good. One excuse, of course, was, "I have married a wife and cannot come." Some amused glances were cast our way but we were glad in our hearts that we had long since accepted that great loving invitation.

The first three days of the week were occupied in receiving our freight and in preparation for our 200 mile wedding trip, and it was not till Thursday morning that we set out on this our first trip together. We occupied the centre of the larger of the two canoes and were very comfortable. In the early afternoon we passed Sea Falls, the scene of the accident in which Chief Factor Boulanger and his clerk, Stanley Simpson, were both drowned in the autumn of 1892. Mr. Boulanger was a man of great weight, and is supposed by some movement to have upset the canoe, with the sad result. The steersman got ashore, and is, at this date, 1939, still living at Norway House.

Toward evening we met the Nelson House York Boat Brigade of thirty men in three boats. Mr. Stout and his clerk were in company with the boats but in their own canoe. Though we all could have continued an hour longer,

we decided on the pleasure of camping together. There were in all thirty-six in the party. The men all shook hands with Mrs. Gaudin, expressing their pleasure that she was coming to live among them in their native land. Many of the men wore no hats or caps, but had red handkerchiefs tied around their heads to keep their hair in place. In true native politeness, all alike took off their hats or handkerchiefs when shaking hands. After supper all gathered for evening devotions and took part in the singing and were very respectful. There were in the group, likely, a few Roman Catholics, but there appeared no difference. Then, after a smoke, the men wrapped themselves in their blankets, mostly under the protection of mosquito nets, and soon all were quietly sleeping.

By five in the morning the camp was astir. After a hasty meal the men took to their boats, and bending to their oars shot out into the river and then with a farewell cheer swept on their way. After a short good-bye talk with Mr. Stout and the clerk we parted for a time; they on their way to Norway House, we on our course down the Nelson River toward our new mission home at Poplar Point, Nelson House. Toward evening we reached Cross Lake, with its Indian Reserve, Hudson's Bay store, and a Free trading store under Mr. Donald McIvor. To the home of Albert Ross, a native, had lately come twin girls, and now as we passed along, I was called to baptize them. My wife was given the honor of providing the names. She suggested Kate and Rebecca. The latter still lives, but Kate has long since passed away. Later in the evening we came to the White Mud portage which passes along near the rapid of the same name. Here at the approach to the portage is the grave of Rev. Edward Eves, who was drowned in the Pelican rapid in June, 1893. We stood around the grave and read the inscription on the stone

erected by his wife. The grave is enclosed by an iron railing. I knew Mr. Eves well, having lived in his home during my first year in the North. He was a good preacher, and had acquired considerable facility in the Cree language. Before him was the promise of a very useful life, but it was cut short in a very tragic way. How true:

“Dangers lie thick through all the ground, — — —  
To hurry mortals home”.

We passed thoughtfully on our way across the portage, where a little to one side we obtained a fine view of the great rapid said to be the highest in horse power of any in the entire Nelson River system. From the landing at the end of the portage our men shoved out in the very centre of the heaving, rolling river, the aftermath of the great falls above. A large rapid at one side seems to threaten to engulf the canoes, which bob wildly up and down, but these Indian men know their work, and passing the danger they sweep along to where we are waiting in a safe place on the shore to which we had walked. Here they quickly took us in, and in a moment we were facing another rapid with quite a drop, but we went through it with a cheer into the smoother waters beyond. In these rushing rapids and swirling waters we know not how close hidden death may lurk, but on the human side we have skilled men, and overshadowing is the care of a loving Heavenly Father, so we have no fear. We passed a rapid where a retiring servant of the Company lost his life. He was on his way to his Scottish home and friends when on this portage a hauling line of a York boat caught his feet, and he was hurled headlong from the rocks into the boiling rapid below. After some time his poor broken body was found down the river and buried on the shore of a deep bay.

Then we came to Bladder Falls, where a guide lost his

life when steering one of the York boats through the rapid. We passed through many dangers, and then on Saturday afternoon we crossed Sepewisk, a large lake emptying into long narrow channels or vistas. Here we camped and remained over Sunday. It was a beautiful spot and a choice day, and all enjoyed the Sunday rest and quiet. On Monday we said good-bye to our friend, the Nelson River, and took the "short" way which led across many portages, most of which were by no means short. The first of these, Cross Portage, is much over a mile in length. In working out the portages, each of the two stronger men carried a canoe, the other two, Angus and Joseph, divided the baggage into four loads. Two, they packed half way on the portage, then returned for the other two loads. When they reached the half way place with their baggage, the canoe men had already returned to pick up the first two loads, and thus the four arrived together at the end of the portage. In the meantime we had been slowly making our way across, in places wading deep muskegs, often sinking knee deep, sometimes almost deep enough to swim. A rain storm on a canoe trip is usually not very desirable, but on one occasion it brought with it a feeling of real relief. Mrs. Gaudin had that day already tramped across two long portages, and very much dreaded a third, when just as we approached this portage a welcome rain came on. The tent was hastily put up, blankets were got up and, as the rain continued for some hours, a comfortable rest was enjoyed which brought her renewed strength for the balance of the day. Having been wind-bound on one of the lakes, the men made up for lost time by travelling during the night. However, we slept so soundly in the canoe that we heard nothing, though the men in the second canoe shot ducks as they paddled along. When we wakened we found the canoe was tied at the shore. The men were

resting some little distance away, awaiting daylight, as a rapid was near which required good light. When they saw we were awake they came at once to the canoe and helped us ashore. They were kind, faithful men, always on guard. Years before the elder men had accepted the Christian faith, and though imperfect, we believe their faces were ever toward the Light.

We arrived at Nelson House Friday evening. Passing by the Mission, we went on to the Hudson's Bay, where we were given a most hearty reception by Mrs. Stout, who was especially kind to Mrs. Gaudin. There and then a friendship began that continued throughout the years. We found her ever a true friend, always ready with sympathy and help. In any special need she was always helpful. In the evening two of the native leaders came in with a kind welcome to the bride.

On Sunday morning all went over to the Mission for the services. We held two and both were crowded to capacity. The people were all delighted, and perhaps a bit curious about the first missionary's wife to come among them. To add to the wonder, and at Mrs. Stout's suggestion, the wedding dress was worn. It was cream in color and very beautiful. Never had these native women seen anything so wonderful, and they looked upon both dress and wearer with something almost akin to reverence. At the close of the morning service I had Mrs. Gaudin stand within the rail where they all came to shake hands, many also kissing her cheek. I was inclined to interfere when some attempted to go through it the second time. Others complained against these extras, saying, "You have already kissed her once".

## CHAPTER 13

### MISSION LIFE AND HOME AT POPLAR POINT

IN 1895, Poplar Point Mission, Nelson House, consisted of a church, a small dwelling house and a store room. All were built of logs. There were as yet no native homes near, but during two of the summer months a goodly number of people camped back of the Mission. The location of the church had been decided on by a vote of the Indians and it was as near the centre of the settled people as was possible. The Hudson's Bay people, and a number of native families were two miles distant on one side, while a mile across the lake was a little settlement, and two miles further on was the *Oo twa hoo win* community. The people were all very faithful in attendance at the services of the Church and were also very kindly disposed toward ourselves. Many of the hunters were a fine type of men.

In about two weeks after our arrival the York boats returned and with them our freight and Mrs. Gaudin's luggage. Our supplies were for the year. This suggests the conditions that prevailed at that time. In addition to our groceries there were a few chairs, some dishes, a small cook stove with kitchen utensils,—a modest outfit to which, in course of time we added as we had need.

Mrs. Gaudin became very busy getting things in order after cases had been opened. I had during the winter made a high side-board with panel doors, with upper and deeper lower part and large drawer. This Mrs. Gaudin stained and varnished and it thus became a really fine piece of furniture, so that some visitors even thought it had come from Winnipeg.

Calls from the sick began to come, as the people learned that the lady of the mission was a skilful doctor nurse. They came with their sick or injured, and the needed help was always cheerfully given. Whether the sick came to the Mission or were some miles distant, no call was ever neglected. One day before our chairs had come, Mrs. Gaudin was sitting on a low stool beyond a curtain which divided the room. She was reading near a window, when suddenly a tall Indian in bare feet stood noiselessly before her. Startled for a moment, she finally gathered by his signs that she was urgently needed. Following her strange visitor she found a young man lying on the ground in an unconscious state. Strong coffee soon restored him. She then discovered that his chief trouble was a lack of nourishing food. He was able to take a little prepared food, and afterwards became a recipient from the Mission supplies. At the time I was away on a visit to the Split Lake people. They had not seen a missionary since my visit to them the year before, and received me gladly.

On the morning of the fourth day on our return trip, we left our camp at four o'clock. Our three paddles kept time all day, except when we stopped for a lunch. We were travelling up stream, against much strong current and around half a dozen rapids, but we must have made not less than fifty miles that day, reaching home not far distant from midnight. As I entered the kitchen, John George, a Norway House native working about the Mission, whispered to me in a most alarming way, "Your wife is very sick." In a moment Mrs. Gaudin had her arms around my neck, declaring, "I am not sick, I am all right." She had been really sick, and it was some days before she could really claim to be "All right".

The summer season was a very busy time, but in fact all days were busy. Logs had to be got out and then sawed

into lumber. Our year's supply of dry wood had to be rafted home and then cut ready for the stoves. This all had to be done while young men were about and ready for work. It was a case of "making hay while the sun shone". All were cheerful at their work, and industrious habits were being developed, and so it went on.

Then there was the higher and spiritual side of the work. Short services were held wherever a number of families were camped near one another. Those camped near the Mission were often called to the church for evening devotions, but the Wednesday prayer service was the great religious event of the week. In these services singing had a large part, then a Scripture lesson and a short talk followed by prayer and testimony. This the Christian Indians enjoyed very much. All was in Cree as their language had become as our own.

Mrs. Gaudin's skill was often brought into use. One case that required the best care and skill was that of a young girl badly burned at an outside fireplace where her clothing caught fire. Her burns extended from the tops of her moccasins along both legs to the small of her back. This happened many long miles from the Mission. She was brought in by her father in such a condition that the poor girl could lie only on her face in the canoe. After showing her around to their Indian friends, she was brought ashore at the Mission. Mrs. Gaudin was so moved with pity for the unfortunate child that she begged the father to bring her up to the house to give her a chance to save the poor little thing, but to every plea he turned a deaf ear. His objections, no doubt, were due to the fact that he and his family were Roman Catholics. Providence however, disposed otherwise. A rain came on, and the parents were obliged to bring their little daughter to the shelter of the kitchen, and once there they agreed to treatment. The poor child was in a terrible condition. Scabs



and filth covered the extended burns. Rabbit hair, moss and spruce needles were imbedded in the burns. Skilful treatment and care wrought wonders in this case. In six weeks she was so far recovered as to be able to return to her friends; for some time she was brought to the Mission for regular dressings until completely cured. Gratitude now took the place of the former opposition, but best of all was the love that this native girl returned for what had been done for her. Years after, when she was a married woman, she visited us at Norway House, still expressing her gratitude and love.

A sequel to the above story is very interesting. Early the following spring, at a time when lake travel by canoe was not yet clear of ice, a brother of the above mentioned girl arrived at the Mission. He was in very poor condition. Tuberculosis, the Indian's enemy, had already fastened its fatal grip upon him. The poor fellow seemed to think that where his sister had been so helped there should be the same for him. We took him in, and tried what good food and attention might do, but it was all in vain. He had come too late. His trouble was caused through becoming overheated in pursuit of a moose. He had thrown off his outer coat. When he killed the moose it was too late and too far to go for it, and he became chilled by the intense cold. When we know there was no hope for him, we thought he should know. At this he decided to go to his Catholic friends. His parents and others were camped just outside the Mission fence, and to them he went. We continued to supply him with a little food, as much as he was able to use, and we visited him every day. He failed very rapidly. The poor fellow's mind seemed very dark. One day when he was not far from the end I said to him, "John, how do you feel, are you happy?" "Of course," was his answer, in a tone that did

not indicate very much. When death came the old father broke down. He then came to us, and said, "You are our friends. Could the body rest in the church, and would you have a service?" All this was done, and a message was given. Then the body was taken in a canoe to the *Oo twa hoo win* where there was a Catholic church and a cemetery. There another service was held by an older brother of the deceased, as they were without a priest at that time. So he had the benefit of both ways, if there were any virtue for the dead in such forms.

## CHAPTER 14

### OUR FIRST BORN

IT WAS IN THE YEAR 1896, on the 27th of July, that our first-born came to us. We named her Frances Irene, but to the Indian people she has always been Iurene. As far as we could learn she was the first white child born at Nelson House. The people were all deeply interested in her arrival. On that eventful night a very fine Indian kept a constant watch around the Mission House, unmindful of the passing hours as he continued his vigil awaiting the news in which he was so intensely interested. As the sunlight was flooding the eastern sky, I was able to announce to his great joy the safe arrival of a little daughter. Speaking in the Cree Tongue, I said "Robinson", *No tanis sin in*. "Oh thank you, and thank you Muneto", he added reverently. Highly satisfied he went to his tent to proclaim the good news, and very soon the church bell was joyously ringing and the flag flying in honor of the new arrival. A very kind and interested people were those old time natives of Nelson House.

A few days later Robinson came quietly into the room and with trembling lips asked if he might hold the *iskwa sis* (baby girl), and little Irene was placed in his arms. Holding her tenderly for a short time, he imprinted a kiss on the little pink hands, then handing her back he went out, his own face as if he had seen the face of an angel. As Robinson had no children of his own, he came quite often, sometimes taking Irene up himself, crooning to her in his own language. This was to him a real joy, but the time soon came when Robinson with his wife and friends took their departure to far-off Indian Lake for the year's trapping and hunting.

When our little *Nestum oo san* (first born) was but three days old, twenty-eight men, crews of three York boats, left for Norway House for Hudson's Bay Company freight. On their way they came ashore at the Mission point. Every last man came up to the Mission house to say "What Cheer" to the Mission folk, especially now with a brand new baby to salute as also the mother of this same baby. Many of them imprinted a kiss on the baby fingers as also the cheek of the mother. Then with a last good-bye, they were again in their boats, each man in his own position, strong arms pulling the great oars with every man on his feet, their bodies swaying back and forth, the oars sweeping through the water in perfect unison. Soon they passed out of sight around a distant point.

Shortly after the boatmen made their visit, there arrived at the Mission a middle aged Indian very much excited. He had lately lost a baby girl. This loss had evidently affected his mind very deeply. Muneto had sent this new baby, our little *Nestum oo san* and he urged that we allow him to adopt her as his own. He did not seek one from the many little ones of his own people, but it was the white baby that appealed to him in such a strange way and seemed to satisfy the vacant place in his heart. To his desire we momentarily agreed and with tear-filled eyes he held little Irene in his arms, close to his heart. Of course there was no thought of anything but that he would love and be kind to the child. His idea of adoption did not mean more than that. Peter lived quite a distance away, but he often came in to see his adopted and always brought for her a choice fish, or a special piece of moose meat or pemmican. As she grew, she gradually began to accept his claim, and the Cree tongue became as her own language. *Ne papa Peta Moose*, she would say when he came to visit her.

Our first trip out over the two hundred miles by canoe to Norway House was in the month of August 1898. Ida, our second little girl was then nine months old. Irene was a month over two years and could already speak both Cree and English very well. Peter to his great joy was steersman in the canoe, which in fact he had built and by all right was a proud man. A canoe trip makes a splendid trip when the weather is good, but the many long portages tend to spoil it for a time. I usually carried the two children over my back in a shawl, but sometimes Mrs. Gaudin carried baby Ida in the bosom of her dress.

We had a pleasant visit at Rossville where the Nelsons were the missionaries. Rev. Dr. John McDougall happened to be there but in bed, quite ill. Mrs. Gaudin became his nurse, and before we left for home he was able to be around again. Dr. John MacDougall was the great Cree orator and a pioneer missionary of the West.

During the last three days of our return journey our food supply ran very low, with nothing on our last day on the home stretch. At our last camp the men had shaken out a little flour from the bag, and with a small remnant of bacon had made a little *Robabeau* (thick soup). This was something that Irene liked very much. Sidling close to her *papa Peta*, she pleadingly said *Keyam ne papa us su min ap a ses ro bu boo*, (please my papa give me to eat a little robuboo). With that Peter poured all he had into her plate though he would be without anything to eat that night. It was enough for him that she enjoyed her *robu boo*.

Some time after his return from this canoe trip Peter began to act very strangely. On one occasion having gone as steersman in one of the York boats, he believed the men were planning to attack him. To avoid trouble he fled from

them in the night, made his way home a distance of one hundred miles around large lakes and rivers. He left just as he stood, without food, axe or gun, yet he arrived home safely. No wonder some of the Indians believed he must have had supernatural help or he never could have survived.

Another time he went away in the fall to a distant and secret place in the woods without food, and with very little ammunition. Having shot a moose he found the bullet and used it again. When, on in the winter he was found, he was dressed in a coat he had made from the skins of the rabbits he had snared.

After some years he became mentally well and was chosen as Chief of the band and became quite a speaker and often spoke in a church service. One Sunday afternoon he spoke with special force, but on Monday morning it was found that he had passed away during the night. Thus suddenly passed Irene's papa, *Peta Moose*.

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## INDIAN STORIES

ADAM ROSS was in many ways a peculiar native character.

I knew him as well as one could know an Indian, short of living with him, as we employed him off and on in general work about the Mission for at least ten years. We found Adam to be very truthful, but he was very sensitive to any reproof. Taken in a kindly way, he would do almost anything for one. Adam, though poor, was adverse to anything approaching begging. I have known him to refuse clothing because he thought it was being given to him as charity. This attitude, to say the least, was very uncommon in an Indian. Old Adam never attempted to drive dogs, and he was very adverse to having much to do with domestic animals of the stable, especially should one of them get into trouble, such as a cow getting stuck in her stall. From all such uncanny troubles Adam hastily beat a safe retreat.

On one occasion Adam rushed wildly into the Mission kitchen but the missionary alone was considered worthy of receiving his important news, which happened to be that the kitchen roof was on fire. Adam called repeatedly, "Where is the *iyúme hay weke mow* (Where is Mr. Gaudin?). Come! come! and see," he cried, while the roof blazed. There was no little excitement until the fire was brought under control. A few shingles repaired the damage, but Adam's comical way of announcing the fire was not soon forgotten.

Adam remained Protestant, while his wife became Roman Catholic but neither seemed to object to the choice of the other. The first two boys of the family were given to the

priest to attend the Catholic Boarding School, but strange to say, in a short time they both sickened and died. The next two, both boys, were christened in the Methodist church, one by myself. They grew to manhood, married and have families of their own. Then when to Adam and his wife was born a baby girl, the last child in the family, the mother said to me in her good-natured way, "I want this little daughter to be with me in my church." Her wish was carried out but strangely enough the little one lived only a few short months to the great sorrow of the poor mother. (I relate these facts as they actually were; I assume no explanation). It is a curious fact, however, that in the case of a very sick child superstitious Protestant parents sometimes called in the priest to baptize the child in the hope that by this method the child might recover. The priest was willing to take the risk, for if the child recovered his religion got the credit but if there was no recovery then it was laid at the door of Providence. In another way Adam acted very peculiarly. He once suddenly began to attend the Catholic church and continued for a couple of months. Then he just as suddenly returned to our church, and though surrounded by Catholic friends and neighbors, he remained faithful to the end.

Some few years after this old Adam's time came, and what a wonderful passing this simple, native Christian had! As he gradually approached the great end, all his faculties became wonderfully brightened, his faith fixed and secure. On my many visits to him he always received me in a very happy way. As the end drew near his glad face glowed with that light "that is not seen on land or sea," but flows down from the city of which the Lord God and the Lamb are the light thereof. Thus passed on with joy and victory this one-time "peculiar character".

We reverently laid his body away to rest in God's acre,



assured that this humble soul had "entered into that rest which remaineth for the people of God".

The parents and interested friends had arranged a marriage between two young people, Thomas and Mary, when they were both quite young. On reaching a marriageable age Thomas became very much dissatisfied with the old arranged plan, as he preferred another for his wife and that other was Mary's elder sister. In his dilemma he came to us for advice which, of course, was: "Go yourself and propose to the girl you prefer." Soon he returned to report on his venture. "Well", we inquired, "How did you get along?" "Oh," said he, "She just laughed". As this seemed promising, we sent for Isabel, the sister of Mary. "He wants to throw away my sister and I do not like that," said she. "But", we replied, "you should be proud that he wants you for his wife." This was a new idea, and there and then Isabel gave Thomas an answer that pleased him much. Mrs. Gaudin's sewing machine was soon humming to the tune of a new wedding dress, and before sundown in the presence of a large gathering of friends in the church, Thomas and Isabel plighted their troth with those who expressed their good wishes.

In this connection of arranged marriages, I felt it necessary to protest against the use of force by the parents in these affairs of their young people. "Is your daughter pleased," I inquired of a father who came asking for Banns of Marriage to be published between his daughter and a certain young man. To this the father answered with great assumed dignity, "My daughter does as I tell her." "Not so" said I, "Young people should not be compelled to marry against their will." As we come further south, Norway House and Fisher River the young people have asserted their right to manage these affairs for themselves.

## CHAPTER 16

### THE NELSON HOUSE INDIANS

**I**N COMMON with all the natives of the North the Indians of Nelson are, above all else, trappers. They may do many other things, but trapping is their first work. Their livelihood depends on their skill in so setting their traps or snares as to assure the best result. Naturally their success also depends on how plentiful the fur animals may be. It is a fact that the Indian if undisturbed on his trapping grounds, would never exhaust the fur supply. If at any time there should appear such a danger, he simply moves to another locality where fur is more plentiful, leaving his old ground to restock itself in the natural way.

Many of these native men were great hunters, very clever in tracking down the moose or deer, though both are very wary and hard to follow and to kill with a quick shot. Meat killed during the approach of the warm weather is preserved by the women drying it and sometimes making pemmican from the hams. The women also prepared and tanned the skins which when soft and smoked were made into moccasins or mittens, often beautifully ornamented with silk or bead work. In this way the men were comfortably fitted out for their hunting and trapping expeditions.

During my fifteen years at Nelson House the age-old system of giving debt to the hunters was the common practice of the Hudson's Bay Company. The best hunters would commonly be allowed supplies to the value of from five to seven hundred skins. A skin in value was something more than half a dollar. In beginning his debt the Indian would

sometimes be given a large number of goose quills arranged in tens that he might more easily keep count of his debt taking. A sack of flour might be sixteen quills. If he wanted five pounds of tea he would hand out ten quills and so he would go on till all his quills would be taken up. The quills thus became, in a sense, a medium of exchange. This method has long since passed away as also the giving of such large debts to the Indian trappers. In those days, when during the winter the Indian paid up, his debt was renewed and so on till about the end of May, the trapping season was over. All debts were then to be paid up, and very few were failures. I have known of an Indian in a few months to secure forty martens, and another to get fifty lynx, and in a certain season the trappers of Nelson House had as one item 2,000 prime martens to the credit of their catch. Yet the Indians could not by any means be said to be well off. It is true that there was a great amount of expense in connection with the fur trade which made heavy commodities such as flour and sugar expensive.

During the two summer months, the middle of June to the middle of August, was the period of freighting of supplies from Norway House. For this work the Hudson's Bay Company employed twenty-eight able-bodied men of Nelson House to travel in the York boats. Three boats were in the brigade and two trips were made each year. In this way, on the two trips, they were able to transport about twenty-five tons of various supplies suitable to the Indian fur trade. I wish to bear witness, even at this late date, that in my opinion, no men ever did such heavy work for so comparatively small pay as did these Nelson House men on those hard freighting trips in which they were engaged year after year. Talk about lazy Indians. Even now it makes me indignant. I see those men rowing heavy boats with heavy oars, every

man with every pull of the oar rising to his feet like clock work in a unison that was wonderful. Then for days with their heads in portage straps attached to a bow line pulling like horses, heavy boats against the swift current of the Nelson River, so swift that it was impossible to row the boats against it. Then to haul the heavy boats over the many portages often with steep ascents was indeed most laborious work.

On the return trip with boats fully loaded, each man had to make at least six trips over each portage carrying not less than 200 lbs. No wonder after five or six weeks of such strenuous exertion the men should look as if pulled to pieces. Ordinarily the Indian is a pleasant fellow and works happily.

In his own Cr e tongue he is very witty and quick to see a joke. He will laugh long and loud at some comic mishap. On one occasion during the portaging, one of the men had as his load, a cookstove. Near the end of the portage there was quite a decline down to the edge of the lake. As he started on this decline the weight of the stove forced him to run so that he could not stop, and man and stove all went over the bank, and plunged over his head into the deep water of the lake. He was able to climb back to shore like a half drowned rat but glad to have made his escape. To his companions this was a very laughable affair, to be told again and again with humour and gusto. It is said that the lost stove was never recovered.

Again, one time on the arrival at Norway House of the Nelson House brigade the middle-men sought an interview with the Chief Factor and complained that the Guide and the steersmen received big wages while, they who did the hard heavy work received small pay. On hearing this the Factor in his great wisdom thought to defend this method

in such a way as would appeal to the "stupid" Indians. "Of course", said the Factor, "leaders should have the high pay and" said he, "what would a fish be without a head?" but to the Factor's great surprise and chagrin, a witty and roguish Indian answered, "Yes, but what would a fish do without a tail?" This witty reply produced a great laugh.

The members of the Nelson House Band were about to elect a Chief. They had but lately become an organized band in treaty relations with the Dominion Government, and it was now necessary that they should elect a Chief and three Councillors. It was treaty time and the entire Indian community had assembled and were seated on a grassy spot. The Indian Agent in his official capacity was there, as also were the missionaries, of whom I was one, all interested in the matters to be discussed.

The name of a certain elderly Indian was proposed for Chief. It seems that this man had lately been rejected by the men as guide in the York boats. "What!" exclaimed one of the men as he jumped to his feet, "What! shall we take as our Chief one we so lately threw away? Never!" This was very strongly expressed in his own forcible native tongue. In spite, however, of this eloquence Joseph Hartie, the man nominated, was elected and continued as Chief for a few years when poor health forced him to resign, and in course of time he passed away.

In the North were natives who were the equals in work or travel of the best to be found among white men. A Norway House Indian whom I knew very well cut eighteen cords of spruce wood every week during most of the winter, and finished his weekly stint by Saturday noon. He was paid at the rate of \$1.25 per cord, thus earning \$22.50 a week. Not too bad for one of our "lazy" Indians.

"Well James, how do you feel about a run to Norway House to-morrow?" The questioner was Mr. A. Stout, manager of the Hudson's Bay Company store at Berens River situated on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. James Halcro, a native of Norway House was noted for his great running ability. He was now to attempt a very special feat. He was to run to Norway House in one long day, a distance of about 140 miles from Berens River. Though James was the best of runners, he might well have hesitated at such a challenge, but no, he was game for, at least a try at it. He could do as well as the dogs. The start was made in the small hours of the morning about two o'clock. It was toward the end of March and the lake was as smooth as the floor and the dogs struck some speed but James kept well ahead running easily. About half way a fire was made as it is said, "to drink tea", which includes the eating of a meal; then they were off again. Mr. Stout was running about half the time. That night at ten o'clock James walked into the Norway House kitchen, having made the biggest "run" of the "big runs" of the North country. The Canadian six mile champion is a Norway House man, Joe Keeper, who represented Canada at the Olympics in Sweden. It is claimed that his time for the six miles remains unbeaten.

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## CHAPTER 17

### BIRCH-BARK CANOES

WHILE THE younger and stronger men were working, during the summer in the freighting boats, the older men were busy making birch-bark canoes, and in this work they certainly were artists. These old canoe-builders were not just building for themselves. They gathered and prepared material sufficient to build a number, and so were ready to take orders. These might be received from boat men who had not yet learned to build a canoe but were able to pay for it. Then the Hudson's Bay Company, or the missionary, might also give an order. The first canoe I owned and used was made by one of these fine old men, was well built, fairly large and for which I was charged the "great" amount of \$15., and that in the usual way of trade. Some of the smaller canoes were intended only for paddling about at short distances, while the larger and stronger might have a carrying capacity of 800 lbs. Years ago, in some districts the Hudson's Bay Company used, for freighting and travelling very large birch-bark canoes having a capacity of two or three tons and requiring a crew of seven men. In making these canoes the Indian did all the shaving of wood with a crooked knife which he usually made himself out of an old file or rasp. In this canoe-making the women had an important part. They did the sewing of seams with roots finely prepared and softened by soaking them in a liquid procured from alder twigs. The women also prepared and applied the pitch, *pik-you* to the seams, and did their work so well "that the water could not wet you"; Such a canoe was like unto Hiawatha's *Chee-maun* that

"Floated on the river  
Like a yellow leaf in Autumn  
Like a yellow water-lily  
And the forest's life was in it."

This native canoe-making is now almost a lost art. The old canoe builders have passed on and have had no successors. The Peterborough canoe has displaced the old Birch-bark. This change is to be regretted as times are becoming very hard for the Indian who finds it increasingly difficult to provide himself with a high, dry canoe.

Some years ago, during Treaty time at Cross Lake, a birch-bark canoe belonging to an old Indian was lying on the bank of the river with one end touching the water. Miss Frances Nikewa, the Indian Entertainer, was visiting on the Reserve and happened to notice the canoe. The habit of her race came upon her, and in a moment she had shoved the canoe into the water and taken her place in the centre. With paddle in hand and upright on her knees, looking as if she were part of that canoe, she paddled it out into the current of the river. It was her first time in such a craft and there arose a great outcry from the gathered people who feared that she would upset. They shouted to her to come back, but Miss Nikewa paid no attention to their cries. She was as a queen in that canoe, as if she and it were united in one. She kept on her way, crossed the river and paddled over to the Mission just "as to the manner born".



## INDIAN SUPERSTITION

SUPERSTITION belongs not to the Indians alone but is characteristic of all native people in whatever country they may be found. Even the white race has not been free from this tendency. Among them it is somewhat disguised, yet among many other nationalities it still lingers. For example, there is the Irish Banshee, the tapping on the window pane, the howling of the dogs, some peculiar appearance or voices, dreams, all considered signs that death or other serious something will surely happen. Then religion is often mixed up with what seems very closely akin to superstition, as when great value is placed on certain rituals, relics, and so-called "holy" objects and places. These seem to be the old superstitions in a new dress. How otherwise may we understand the popularity of tea cup reading and the seances of spiritism?

Now, when such peculiar ideas are found among otherwise intelligent people, is it any wonder that strange vagaries should prevail amongst a native people as unlettered as our Indians of the Northern wilds? They are a people of the woods, the lakes and the rapids, where the fairies of "Ye olden time" were said to dwell.

After one has lived in close association with our Cree Indians, as I did for forty-four years, one learns much about their beliefs and their way of life. The untutored Indian has not the remotest idea of the operation of natural law, and even when the children have attended a residential school, and then returned to their people, they frequently come again under the spell of the old superstitions of their forefathers.

One of their superstitions is belief in the Medicine man, *Mus-kee-gee-wee-yin-a-new*. Thus it was not so much the medicine in which they trusted as it was in the great power of the medicine man himself. It was considered all to the good if he were also a conjurer who beats a drum for the curing of the sick. Furthermore, the medicine-man had to be paid before a cure could be possible. This, of course, was the conjurer's scheme. Some special articles given in payment tend toward a cure; a rifle, a suit of clothes, or even a house, are all considered very effective. Drumming by the medicine conjurer has also been considered very helpful.

On one occasion to visit a sick woman I made a journey of twenty-five miles. As the river there was flooded, I walked the last two miles along the shore. As it was already dusk, an Indian, in whose shack I had put up for the night, came along as my guide. We stumbled over rocks and stones along the shore till we reached the house of the sick woman. As we went in we noticed an old man, an arch conjurer, lying on the floor on a matting, wrapped in his blanket and apparently asleep. As I approached the bed on which the sick woman lay, she turned her back on me. This was not very encouraging, nor was it much return for my many miles of travel. After a few words to her, I left. When we were a short distance away from the house, my guide, Jacob began to talk. "Did you think the old man had gone to bed?" he asked. "Of course, I thought so", I answered. "Not so", said he, "the old man just threw himself down when he knew you were coming in, and as he did not wish to meet you he pretended to be asleep. He is conjuring for the sick woman and that was why she would not speak to you. Listen! Listen to his drum", Jacob went on. Sure enough we soon heard the weird boom, boom of the old conjurer's drum. The woman finally recovered. I do not think she was very sick,

but no doubt old John got the credit. Performances similar to this have been common, often with anything but a happy result. I slept that night in Jacob's shack. When in the early morning I was again on the trail, my dogs ran over the miles, and I was soon in the happy atmosphere of home, relating the story of my visit.

Another strange Indian belief has been that the medicine man has the power, even at a distance, to cause death to a native whom he may wish to so injure. Though the conjurer may know nothing of the laws that govern the mind, yet he does know the effect of fear upon an Indian and in his evil purpose, he acts accordingly. He lets it be known that he has intentions on the life of a certain person. The word is passed along and the intended victim soon hears that the power of the conjurer is to fall on him. He is by this so filled with fear that he becomes sick, which causes greater fear, and his illness increases till he finally dies, and again the medicine man is looked upon as having great power which is to be greatly feared. It is a fact, however, that the conjurer never claimed any power over white men nor yet over true Christian natives.

Another common practice of the pagan Indian was to place in or on the grave, articles which had belonged to the departed, his axe, his gun, with ammunition or other articles of clothing or food. A feast at the grave was common, though they might declare to the missionary that such a feast had no special meaning. Again a white flag is often hung up on a pole over the grave. Of this an Indian friend said, "As I go back and forth I see this flag and I think of my little one that lies there". Some years ago a traveller on the Western plains, as darkness was coming on became anxious as to where he might find shelter for the night. Suddenly he noticed a tepee situated on a high wooded bluff and

to it he made his way. As he came near the tepee he saw a horse bridled and saddled but lying dead near the tepee. He then noticed a line leading from the bridle and passing through the passage into the tepee. On entering he saw this line was held by an Indian sitting upright against the side of the tepee, but like the horse he also was dead. For a time the traveller was uncertain as to what he should do, but as this was the only shelter in sight from the cold of the night, he decided to stay. He first asked this privilege from the dead occupant, and then brought in his blanket. He then prepared his lunch but before eating placed a portion before his host asking him to kindly accept. Then after a smoke he said "good-night" and rolling himself in his blanket he was soon sleeping soundly. Waking early he went through the same performance as the night before, and when ready to continue his journey he thanked his host for the accommodation of the night and went on his way. The traveller who related this story happened himself to be an Indian and thus understood the entire situation.

When we understand the belief of the old time Indian as to the future life we will not wonder at his strange performances. In accordance with our Christian faith we believe that only man has a soul or spirit which at death passes into the future life, but this was not the belief of the untaught Indian. He believed that not only man but also all animals had spirits, and he further believed that this applied to inanimate things as well. All had spirits which could pass over to the "Happy Hunting Grounds" to be used by departed friends in the activities of the after life.

Longfellow in one of his shorter poems pictures the death and burial of a great Indian Chief. In the grave had been placed the weapons of battle and the chase. Then in the following picturesque vivid words he tells the story:

They buried the dark chief, they freed  
Beside the grave his battle steed  
Then swift as an arrow cleaved its way  
To his stern heart, one piercing neigh  
Arose,—and on the dead man's plain  
The rider grasps his steed again.

This is in accord with the story of the Indian traveller of the tepee as related above.

This was much the condition of our Indian friends of the North till they heard the Good News, and the light of the glorious gospel shone into their hearts. Then their old beliefs began to pass away with the habits of years and a better life and hope to dawn upon them.

But there were and still are those, who with the light all about them see it not, and continue to live in the old pagan darkness (I give here an instance of the kind of value a half-pagan Indian placed on the Book of Books):

Shortly after we had entered on our work at the Cross Lake Mission, in 1906, an Indian came to me asking for a Cree Bible. That request seemed promising at first thought but in answer to my question he acknowledged that he could not read. "Why then do you want a Bible?" was my next question. To this he gave answer: "I am troubled very much with my head. The missionary before you gave me the little book (Cree Hymn Book), but I thought the Big Book would have greater power to help my head." Thus this poor man in his ignorance and superstition thought to use the sacred Book as a charm or fetish. After I had talked to him about the proper use of the Scriptures he left but without the "Big Book" and never came again with the same request.

There are, however, in the North Land many fine, sincere native Christians who esteem their religious books for devotion, instruction and inspiration, thus making them a channel for real help and blessing. They indeed miss very much who have no idea of the true value of sacred books.

May the day speedily come when our Indian people may more fully receive Jesus Christ as both Saviour and Lord to the glory of God the Father.

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## CHAPTER 19

### A DIFFICULT JOURNEY TO CONFERENCE

ON MAY the 6th, 1900, I set out by canoe for Norway House. My purpose was to reach Winnipeg in time to go on to Brandon for Conference. This was especially early for canoe travel, as open water does not usually take place till about the end of May or even a week later. For this trip I had two capable men and we used a Peterborough canoe. We found the rivers were open but the lakes were still covered with quite heavy ice. On an improvised sled we drew our canoe across the mile of ice with which the Mission lake was covered. From there we had river and good paddling till the following day we reached Beaver Dam Lake. Here again we had ice conditions. Another rough sled was hastily made on which our canoe was tied. One man hauled in front while we two shoved behind. About a mile of rough ice was crossed in this way. By the time we reached the other side the sharp points on the surface of the ice had made havoc of my rubbers. The men had provided against this by having their moccasin soles covered with green moose skin with the hair left on.

The Burntwood river was free of ice to where it empties into Split Lake. This is a large lake, but we crossed only one end of it to reach the Nelson River. On this part of the lake we had again to cross over quite a body of ice. Our course was now up the Nelson, one great channel for at least one hundred miles. The mouth of the river is quite wide and was covered at the time with ice except in the centre where there was a narrow open channel. Down this channel were running large pieces of ice which finally plunged be-

neath the strong surface of the lake. The floating ice was carrying large portions of mud.

We went over the surrounding ice toward the open channel to see if it might be possible to navigate its course. We soon saw this was out of the question, and we decided to camp for the night at the edge of the woods that came down near the shore line. We proceeded to haul our canoe containing our baggage near to our camping place. We had just left the ice when it seemed as if an earthquake had struck it, and a terrible commotion took place. The ice was split in all directions and great bodies of it were thrown into the air and hurled about in a very wild way. Had this happened while we were out on the ice we could scarcely have escaped; it came so suddenly. The loud noise of bursting ice was continued throughout the night. This sudden upheaval was caused by floating snow and ice with mud being carried down to the shallow water under the main ice till a dam was formed. The water gathered increasing power, while the ice weakened till the crash came.

Next morning we paddled across where we had been walking the evening before. However, the open water did not extend very far, and we had to take to the ice again, and this time we had about four miles of it, the worst tramp we had had. Through the lowering of the water the ice sloped very much toward the centre of the river, which made carrying baggage by portage-strap very awkward. When walking with a load on this smooth sloping surface one's feet would suddenly fly from under him, and down he would go, while his load scattered about. This frequently occurred along the whole distance over which we had to tramp this extended ice field. The good natured way in which the men went through such naturally annoying conditions was wonderful.



When, finally, we reached the rapid our special difficulties came to an end. Beyond we had clear open water making a pleasant change from so much ice travel. We also enjoyed a fine breeze which gradually increased to a strong wind which carried our canoe rapidly against the swift current of the river. Our general course was south and along the York boat route, and we were sailing with a stiff north wind.

As the wind was by no means warm, Amos felt the need of his blanket. In pulling it out of his bag he accidentally lost his cup overboard. This made some merriment for Murdo and myself at Amos' expense. We charged him with throwing his cup over as a sacrifice to the spirit of the river that he might give us continued fair wind, (after the manner of the old time Indians). Thanks to the fair wind we were but two days and a half on the hundred miles of the Big River, (*Mise sepe*). We were then opposite Cross Portage. At this point were a few families who were trapping muskrats. We boiled the kettle, enjoyed a couple of rats and then visited. Cross Portage is sixty-five miles from Cross Lake. After *Sepe Wisk*, or the Lake of many Vistas, we approached toward evening a lake made by enlargement of the river. Here we seemed to be again shut out by an extended body of ice. At this Murdo climbed a high spruce tree from which he had a good view of the ice field. He found it was surrounded by open water. This was encouraging and away we went. This made a long circle, but we travelled quite a distance beyond the ice into the river. The next evening we called at Cross Lake and arranged with Miss Kitchen, the teacher for Nelson House, to go on by the return of the canoe.

The following day we arrived at Norway House. On the way we passed Rev. Edward Paupanekis and family who had

left Cross Lake Mission two days before. As they were using a skiff their travel was slow. We all spent Sunday at Norway House where the Rev. John Nelson was the missionary. Mrs. Nelson was not in a very good condition of health. This was our second Sunday since leaving home, and we had travelled three hundred miles in eleven days, in spite of ice difficulties.

Captain Anderson with his sailboat, the *Hustler*, had wintered at Warren's Landing, and was to sail for Selkirk as soon as Lake Winnipeg was considered free of ice. This was a good opportunity for the Mission party to reach Winnipeg in time for the Conference which was to meet in Brandon. With this in view early in the week we made our way to the Landing to be in time for the sailing of the *Hustler*. We were nine in the Mission party: In the Paupanekis' party were four, in the Stevens' three, and last but not least Mr. Nelson and myself.

The *Hustler* soon set sail with all on board. Mr. Stevens and myself were assistants to the Captain, as First and Second Mates. We, however, had no emoluments in connection with our high offices, as we, in common with our party, were paying for passage and also providing our rations.

We started with a favourable breeze and were soon out in the lake sailing toward the eastern side, and with two sails and a jib we made good speed. Mr. Stevens frequently took a turn at the helm.

Our course was uneventful till just as we were approaching the Narrows. I happened to be steering when suddenly the boat failed to answer. I at once gave the alarm, and for a time there was some excitement as we were drifting toward

a near-by high line of rocks which rose up from below the water line. The Captain shouted to the "first mate" to let down the front sail, but in the excitement, the order was misunderstood, and he was about to drop the anchor when the Captain rushed to the fore-sail and between the two it was quickly dropped. The Captain was then able to steer by manipulating the remaining sail. It was wonderful how the boat was thus perfectly managed.

After sailing in this way for some time we ran into shelter at Snake Island. As there are no snakes in the North, it is peculiar how this Island received its name. It may have been from its shape, or possibly a snake may have been found there. On the Island were a number of children with a school provided by the Manitoba Government, obtained, however, through the interest and petition of Mr. and Mrs. Monkman, two very fine people. Mr. Street was the teacher.

The Hustler was hauled up, the helm post repaired, and we were soon again on our way. The boat was well named as under sail she certainly could hustle. Two days before reaching Selkirk a cold drizzly rain came on and continued during the day. As I was on duty on deck, I contracted a cold which brought on an attack of pneumonia. On our arrival in Selkirk I was confined to bed in the hotel, attended by Dr. Grain and also by a practical nurse.

After a few days the party decided to go on to Winnipeg, and though far from well, I decided to go on with them. We all put up at the Roblin House which at that time was a Temperance Hotel. It was suggested by Mr. Nelson that I should go to the General Hospital, as I still needed medical attention. To this I agreed and was in a general ward for about a week. One of the days was Sunday, and I spent a very happy time with my fellow patients. When I was well

enough to leave the Hospital I went on to Brandon in time for Conference. The others had already gone on before.

I will pass over the ordinary routine of the Conference but will notice that Rev. Oliver Darwin was elected President. Dr. Henderson, Associate Secretary of Methodist Missions, prefaced his address with a humorous reference to the newly-elected President. Said the Doctor, "One of my girls one Sunday morning last winter heard a guest preacher. On returning home from the service she was quite enthusiastic about the sermon and the preacher. "My! wasn't he a peach?" said she, and that referred to none other than your worthy President who was the guest preacher on that occasion". This was followed by prolonged applause and laughter from the Conference.

But soon the Conference came to an end, and I was on my way home by the boat to Warren's Landing where we changed to a large tug, the Victor, which landed us at Rossville Mission. There I found two canoe men Murdo and Samuel, just arrived from Nelson House. Mrs. Gaudin had certainly timed their leaving just right. They had brought my lunch box along and well furnished. The freight and supplies were made ready for an early start. The men were given the regular rations sufficient for the entire trip, half a sack of flour, twenty lbs. of bacon, tea, sugar and matches.

Next morning we were on our way by six o'clock with our three paddles hard on the swing. We arrived that evening at Cross Lake about dusk, having carried more than half a ton of freight over four portages and made sixty miles, a distance seldom reached in one day. Thus day after day we travelled down the Nelson and up the Burntwood across numerous portages around rapids that could not be run, till Saturday afternoon found us at Whitewood rapid and por-

tage. Just as we landed we were met by Jacob Wood who had come from the far side of Bearverdam Lake, where Mrs. Gaudin and the children were waiting for my coming. Jacob certainly "hit the nail on the head," or rather that credit was due to Mrs. Gaudin. Jacob at once ran back over the portage, and then we heard the report of his gun, an arranged signal to show that he had met us and that we were near. I had been away nearly two months which always seemed a long time to either of us when the other was away. We now soon had the great joy of all being together again. With Mrs. Gaudin were also three Indian children, Ellen, Susanna Hart and Jonathan Wood. He had already been with us four years, spoke and read English well and was a very promising native boy. After we had lunch together, we went on for a time till we reached a nice spot to remain over Sunday. We enjoyed the quiet and companionship of this great day of rest. We arrived home Monday forenoon. It was surely good to be home again. Everything was in first class order. How wonderfully Mrs. Gaudin directed and controlled the affairs of the home and Mission, using the best of judgment in the many things that often came up in relation to the people. During the two months of my absence the responsibility was by no means light.

As to myself I arrived in the best of health, strong and ready for any amount of work. Many of the people were soon around to welcome me as though I had been a year away. They were indeed a kind, friendly people. Here is a fine big Indian, named Joseph. He brings a wild goose to us. "What shall I give you for it?" I asked. "Nothing, nothing", answered Joseph, "I just wanted you to have it". But I felt that was too much of a gift for a poor man, so I gave him some tea, sugar and flour. Joseph accepted these with many thanks.

About me were our own little ones, Irene and Ida, with the baby boy on my knee all happy that their papa was home again.

In the meantime, the lady of the house had tea and fresh biscuits ready for the older visitors and we thus had fellowship together, and they through it were afresh brought nearer to us by the strong bonds of friendship and love. It became to them as a benediction and also a blessing to ourselves. Surely the Lord himself had been in our midst.

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## CHAPTER 20

### OUR FIRST FURLOUGH

**D**URING the Brandon Conference of 1900, it was decided by the Missionary Society that the Gaudins should be given a furlough that year. Accordingly we made preparation to leave Nelson House toward the end of August. The teacher, Miss Kitchen, was to be in charge of the house and with her the four native children who for some time had been in our care. With her we left sufficient supplies for their welfare during the time of our furlough. Eight children, an equal number of boys and girls, were going with us to enter a Residential School. For this trip we had two canoes, one a birch-bark belonging to Joseph Hartie, one of the canoe men, the other our own Peterborough. We were eighteen in all, and with our outgoing baggage together with blankets and food, our canoes were well filled.

The day before our leaving, an old Chief, John Hartie, came to say Good-bye. Since Mrs. Gaudin's coming we had entertained him whenever he wished to visit and as long as he wished, usually only a few days at a time. The Chief was a sincere Christian respected by the entire community. To hear him pray and testify was a real joy. When he came to say farewell to us, he said in a very beautiful way, "May you find the hand of the Great Father stretched out to you as I have found your hands reached out to me". Mrs. Gaudin was much moved by these words and her eyes filled. A few years later the old Chief passed peacefully away. The funeral was on a Sunday. At the close of the service many came to have a last look. Some of the men began to pay their tributes. Said one, "I knew him well. I have been with

him a great deal. I have worked, hunted and travelled with him, and always he made me feel I wanted to be a better man". What greater testimony could be given to the worth of any man?

To look after eight children, beside our own three was quite a task, to distribute their food four times a day required both effort and time. Sometimes in her kindness Mrs. Gaudin wished to relieve me but she had care enough to look after our three little ones. Much delay together with an occasional shower or a high wind made our travel rather slow.

This was all quite trying to Mrs. Gaudin though she was by no means disposed to complain, but by the time we reached Norway House she was quite unwell. Miss Yeomans, a lady doctor and a member of the School staff, thought it an attack of typhoid. Mrs. Gaudin remained in bed at the school while we waited for the boat, then she had to be taken on a stretcher to the tug and thus to the Landing. There the Captain of the boat demurred about taking her on, but finally decided in her favor. Her trouble was by no means typhoid but was the result of the strain and exposure of the long canoe trip. On the boat she kept her room only one day, and by the time we reached Selkirk she was quite recovered.

In Winnipeg we were kindly received in the home of our old friends, the Nevilles, while the Indian children were accommodated in the home of a couple retired from the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. The woman was a native of the North and could speak Cree, which was fine for the children.

I applied, but without success, to the Principal of the Brandon Residential School, for the admittance of the Indian children. That they were "non-treaty" was the alleged objection. As, however, the Red Deer School was willing to



receive them, we decided to take them there. Mrs. Gaudin with our own children accompanied us as far as Moose Jaw where lived my sister with her husband and two children. After a couple of days there I went on with the eight children passing through Calgary to Red Deer where they were received. Mr. Somerset was the Principal at that time but was later succeeded by Mr. Rice. In the course of two or three years five of those apparently healthy children had died from Tuberculosis.

On my return to Moose Jaw I was met at the station by my brother-in-law, Horace Hurlburt, with the sad news that our baby boy had passed away during my absence. This was a severe blow especially to the mother, yet how bravely she bore up under this sad bereavement. Rev. Oliver Darwin gave us much comfort in that time of loss. After some weeks with our friends in Moose Jaw we returned to Winnipeg where we again joined our kind friends, the Nevilles, in their home.

But the time came for us to move again, this time to Ontario. We travelled by C.P.R. Steamer over the lake route from Port Arthur to Owen Sound, near which lived another of my sisters, Mrs. Brown. After a short visit in her home, we went by stage to Meaford and then by train to Thornbury. When we arrived, a great demonstration was in progress. Great streamers, with all sorts of bunting were strung across the streets in all directions, with the word Welcome emblazoned in great large letters. When all this appeared before us we wondered what it was about. We knew it was not our good fortune to be so grandly received. We soon found out what it was all about. One lone volunteer had arrived in his home town from the scene of the Boer War, though he had not had any part in the conflict, had not even smelt powder, but there were the crowds making a great

hero of a young fellow who was not really worthy of such honour. Yet he was drawn in a carriage by cheering crowds of men to the Town Hall where he was presented with a eulogistic address and a gold watch. But sad to relate he was not just himself before the night was spent. Compare this with the great demonstration.

While we remained among friends for some days, I was invited to speak in the Methodist church on our work at Nelson House. Our plan for our movements was to go across country past our old Kimberly home to Flesherton where a sister with her family lived, her husband W. H. Thurston, being proprietor and Editor of the Flesherton Advance. We were helped out in this plan by a cousin, William Gaudin, a fine Christian man, a farmer at that time. He came to Thornbury for us with a team of horses and democrat over eight miles of country roads from his home in which were his aged mother and maiden sister. All was very familiar to me, but it was Mrs. Gaudin's first trip through that part of the country. Cousin Willie was trying to finish his fall plowing, and kept at it all day through quite a snow storm. The following day, using a sleigh, he took us on to Flesherton a distance of sixteen miles. On our way we passed through Kimberley where I had gone to school and afterwards taught for five years. I noticed the old school house was gone and a large brick one had taken its place. Half a mile further, on we passed our old home where six of us had lived with one of the best of mothers, for fifteen years, and from where we all had taken our respective ways. As my eyes took in the view of the old place a strange feeling came over me and is repeated, as memory returns even as I write. The travel by sleigh was slow but we arrived as evening was closing in. Before leaving for his home Willie read the Scripture and

offered prayer in a very helpful way. He afterwards became an acceptable minister of the Methodist Church.

We had a very enjoyable visit in my sister's home and with my dear mother, at that time nearly seventy-five years of age, still hale and hearty, and so happy to have us with her again. We remained with them a couple of weeks, and I was invited to speak in the neighbouring Methodist church on our Indian work. A large and interested audience heard my message. We then went on to Toronto where we took lodgings in a Temperance Hotel. However, when we called at the Mission Rooms, we met for the first time Dr. Fred Stephenson and he evidently realized how we felt, for at once he invited us to his home. Taking little Ida on his shoulder and a suitcase in the other hand, he led the way to a street car, and we were soon in their home on Czar street. We found Mrs. Stephenson very kind and they invited us to make our home with them while we were in the city. To Irene and Ida, she soon became Auntie Stephenson.

There one day Irene had quite an experience. An organ grinder passed with a dressed up monkey, which gathered up coins should anyone wish to give. For a time he operated in front of the house. Irene was so interested when the monkey and his master moved on, she followed with some other children. She went so far that she had no idea of the way back. Naturally she began to cry. This was noticed by a policeman who inquired as to her trouble. "I don't know my way home", she sobbed. "Where do you live?" kindly asked the policeman. "I live with Auntie Stephenson" was all she could tell him. Fortunately the policeman knew the Stephensons and where they lived. He took her back and her troubles were over.

Some time before Christmas we left Toronto for Mrs.

Gaudin's old home, Oak Point, Bonaventure County, P.Q. During our last night on the train, and about midnight after a stop, we saw coming toward us Mrs. Gaudin's brother, Uncle Thomas Young. With a sudden rush she had her arms around him. "I am so glad", she said, "but why are you here Thomas?" He explained that he had come by a train which connected with ours to stop us from going on to Campbellton as the ice in the River was not fit for crossing. A young man in attempting it the night before was drowned, along with his horse. We left our train at Matapedia to connect with the local Gaspé train, but as we had a five hours wait, we went to a hotel where we had breakfast. This train passed close to Uncle Tom's, and the conductor very kindly stopped his train to let us off.

What a joy it was to my dear wife to be again in her old home with her mother, her brother and also an adopted sister, a fine clever Christian girl. Then there were a host of relatives and friends of her young days. Her father had passed away nearly twenty years before. On the first Sunday of our visit, I was asked to take a service held in the nearby school house for the Presbyterian minister who was in very poor health. This was followed by other services as the minister's condition grew gradually worse till he passed away. We spent the most of the winter in the Oak Point home, with visits among relatives and friends. Then Mrs. Gaudin's favorite sister, Mrs. John LeBlance, with a young family, lived at Carleton some twenty-five miles distant but near the Gaspé railway. With her we spent some pleasant days. John was a Roman Catholic but a very good type of man., I held devotions with them each morning and he made no objection, and was very friendly. I believe that we won the love of the children, and we sent them little New Testaments and Sunday School papers which they enjoyed very

much. The family later moved to Campbellton, and as the children grew up, they all followed their mother's religion, and in time became strong Protestants. On Christmas Eve Uncle and I, through curiosity, attended the Catholic service on an Indian Mission a few miles distant. Quite a number of French and Irish Catholics were also in attendance. I still remember the sermon on peace, which was fairly good, but for us was spoiled before it was finished. The men of the congregation went through a rather interesting ceremony, which I have neither seen nor heard of elsewhere. The men were all given candles which they lighted from the large one, and then walked in a procession through a side door and up along a gallery, then around back to the starting place where each man extinguished his candle.

An interesting visit was to Mountain Brook, the first home of my father and mother, and where we, a family of eight children, were born. I had a clear recollection of the place though I was but six years of age when we left there. I went out to the kitchen which had been moved from the old house. The walls were just as they had been, smoked red from the old fire-place, and there was the large cellar which my father had walled up with cedar logs just as firm as when put in forty-three years before. Down in the hollow was the brook where I used to catch little speckled trout with a pin hook. The farm was now owned by Catholics with the good Scotch name of McIntyre. They kept the community Post Office. I sat down and wrote from the old place to my mother. We returned through Dalhousie and visited in the home in which we had spent our last night before leaving for Ontario in June, 1868. We found the people in the home quite old and feeble not remembering anything of those early days.

Toward the end of March I was invited by Dr. Stephenson to be one of the speakers at a Missionary Conference to be held in Victoria College. The proceedings were all new to me but very interesting. Here for the first time I met Rev. John Doyle. He had been on a mission in the Owen Sound District and was a good speaker. He and Rev. Harper Coates of Japan, and Rev. George E. Hartwell of China, were both on the programme. It was a strong and enjoyable gathering. After the Convention I was invited to speak in two of the great Methodist churches of Toronto, Sherbourne Street and the Metropolitan. Among those who at the close of the latter service waited to shake hands was Senator Cox who kindly said that he had enjoyed the address very much.

In Montreal I was a guest in the Wesleyan Theological College for a time and had one lovely time with the students, telling them comic stories of our travels with Indians in the North. The present Principal of Albert College, Belleville, Dr. Howard, was a student at that time in the College. I gave addresses in several of the Montreal churches. I remember two, St. James and Dominion Square. The interest by large and attentive congregations was evident.

In the meantime Mrs. Gaudin was saying good-bye to the Oak Point friends, and in April she crossed on the Restigouche River to Campbellton and took the train for Montréal, where I was waiting for her. There we had enjoyable times together. With some young friends we climbed Mount Royal, from which the entire city seemed spread out at our feet. With our two children we were entertained in one of the fine homes of the city.

But at length came the time when we felt we had to be moving with our faces toward Nelson House. We spent but a short time in Toronto saying good-bye at the Mission

Rooms, and especially to our kind friends, Dr. and Mrs. Stephenson. We then went on to Flesherton for a final visit in the home of my sister, Mrs. Thurston, and with my mother. While there I received an invitation from Dr. Langford, pastor of the First Methodist Church in Owen Sound, to give an address on the following Sunday, which I was able to do. Mrs. Gaudin and the two children came on from Flesherton in time for us to take passage on the S.S. *Athabasca*, one of the fine C.P.R. boats.

In Winnipeg we bought our year's supplies in time to be shipped north on the first boat, on which we had arranged to take passage. We also had the opportunity of attending Conference, which was meeting in Winnipeg. During this Conference I received my final examinations and was received into "Full Connexion". Rev. Archie McNeil, from Ontario, and his wife, had been appointed to Oxford House, and while in Ontario we did some campaigning together in the District that was supporting him.

Our boat to Warren's Landing was named the *Grand Rapids*. Besides the McNeils were Rev. John Nelson and his wife. They had gone out to Winnipeg the previous summer and had remained out over the winter on account of Mrs. Nelson's severe illness. Now she was returning home without any expectation of recovery. The doctors' diagnosis was tuberculosis of the hip, with no possible help for her. In their trouble they were led to try Christian Science, but without any benefit. Mr. Nelson claimed to believe in it. Poor Mrs. Nelson suffered very much and was hardly able to move. She lay on a bed-frame well padded and suspended from the ceiling as a way of securing a little ease. Mrs. Gaudin was quite sea-sick from the extra motion of the boat. Mr. Nelson's sympathetic advice was "Put your mind against it and you will be all right, it is just your mind", yet his poor

wife was in a much worse condition with the same trouble, and his cure did not seem to give her any relief.

The rough lake voyage being over, on the arrival at Warren's Landing the passengers regained their usual health, and they and the freight were transferred to the tug *Victor*, and were landed at Norway House or Rossville Mission. Previous to our leaving Nelson House, I had made a bargain with four canoe men to meet the first boat in to Norway House. I made for them a sort of calendar by which they could keep account of the days. Six strokes were made for the week days and an X for Sunday. Each month was in separate lines, but the day they were to leave to meet us had a special mark. They left right on time. One of the original four was not able to come, but sent another to take his place. In due time we reached home in safety.

Miss Kitchen, the teacher, and the native children we had left in her care were all happy and in good condition after the hard winter they had come through. Miss Kitchen had one mishap that might have proved serious. The children had found outside a rusty old gun barrel and brought it to the teacher. She thought it would be just the thing for a stove poker. As she was using it in that way it suddenly exploded with a heavy discharge of shot, which were buried in the wall behind her. Had any of the children been in the way it would have been very serious, but, as it has been said, "All's well that ends well". Our own children as well as ourselves all felt that after all, "be it ever so humble, there is no place like home".



## CHAPTER 21

### ODDS AND ENDS IN MISSION LIFE

THE PEOPLE greatly rejoiced over our return. Women put their arms around Mrs. Gaudin and kissed her on the cheek in love and sympathy in the grief she had passed through while away. I was myself not altogether without some little share in their kind attentions. Old people said, "Oh we are so glad you are back again with us. The leaders could not look after us like you".

We were soon very busy putting many things in order, and there were some cases of sickness which needed attention from Mrs. Gaudin. Then August was a very important month to us as on the 23rd of the month, 1901, there arrived a new member of our family, a dear little baby girl. We named her May Neville, the last name after our kind Winnipeg friends, Mr. and Mrs. Neville. She grew to be a very beautiful child and wise beyond her years. When about three years of age she was commonly around in the kitchen where I was teaching the Indian children. No attention was given little May, but to our surprise she began to pick up much from the simple lessons the Indian children were receiving. On one occasion I was having a marriage of Indians in the church, but the bride would not say "I will" (*Nee gah toe tane*). After urging her in vain to say the words, I said, "If you will not speak, then go to your seat". This was too much for little May's patience and she cried out in Cree, "Say, I will". This from a child so shamed the bride that she repeated the required words, and with some hesitation went through her part in the service, and the marriage was completed.

The untrained Indian girls often act as if they were ashamed to get married, and will even turn their faces from the men they are about to marry. During our last two years at Nelson House we had a young Indian girl as a servant. She was not much at first, but became so improved both in her life and work that we decided to take her with us when leaving Nelson House. Unexpectedly it was proposed that Priscilla should marry Daniel Spence who was really a fine Christian boy, but when the interested parties came to see her about it Priscilla, Indian like, fled and hid under her bed, and for a time she was not to be found. Finally she was located. Coming out of her pretended hiding place she cheerfully agreed to become Daniel's wife, and in a few days I had the pleasure of uniting them as husband and wife. We ourselves were much better pleased that Priscilla was settled in a home of her own with a good husband, than if she had gone with us.

To this story there is an interesting sequel which occurred a few years after we left Nelson House. I had been in to Conference and was returning on one of the lake boats. Among the passengers was an Inspector of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on his way to their station at Norway House. We frequently had friendly conversation with each other. When we arrived at Warren's Landing the Inspector was met by a Mountie who was taking in a prisoner who was none other than our young native friend, Daniel Spence. I at once learned from him his story. It seemed that Daniel had left his rifle in a trading store operated by a Norway House Indian for a Mr. Hyer. This native trader had gone to Norway House but was to return in time for Daniel to get his rifle and to go off with his friends to their distant trapping grounds. The trader failed to arrive, and what would the boy do without his rifle? Daniel claimed he could

see his rifle through one of the windows of the store which was a mere shaky affair. The window was easily removed and his rifle taken out and then he joined his friends for the winter hunt. For this Daniel was arrested on a charge of house-breaking. He had been committed by a local Magistrate and was being taken in for further trial. It was lucky that we met them at the Landing and that the Inspector was on hand with power to act in the case. I at once, on Daniel's behalf, approached the Inspector and vouched for the boy's honesty and urged against his being taken in. My plea prevailed and Daniel was taken back to the police barracks at Norway House. On the following day the Inspector sent for me and informed me that he was letting Daniel out on parole to return to his home on condition that I would guarantee that he would answer the call if summoned to again appear at Norway House. To this I could not agree as the distance was too great, not less than four hundred miles to his winter hunting grounds. "Then", said the Inspector, "I will hand this man over to you and that will be the end of the affair". I accepted his proposal as an evidence of confidence in me as also an act of justice to Daniel. I borrowed a canoe and Daniel and I paddled down to Cross Lake. Mrs. Gaudin was as delighted as I was, and we both considered it as a real victory. We were very glad for his wife's sake as well as for his own.

In the early winter Mrs. Gaudin very much enjoyed dressing up and going out with a gun after ptarmigan which were plentiful at that time of the year. She would bag half a dozen of these white grouse, and then turn them into fine soup to the benefit of her household.

Irene and Ida had their own peculiar way of finding enjoyment. In early November when the ice near the shore was about three inches thick they would with a small axe hit the

ice a sharp blow and lo! a miracle took place, for there down in the ice they beheld all sorts of most beautiful colors, and then off they would go and try it in another place with the same result and bring the same pleasure with all these wonderful colors of the rainbow. Then, when some snow had fallen, they would have a change in both pleasure and exercise. An Indian woman or girl would give them a lesson in how to make a snare to catch a rabbit which takes the color of the snow in winter. Then they began to make their own snares which when done well is a clever piece of work and is sure of results. Irene caught her first rabbit with her own snare when she was only four months over seven years of age. I had promised her a dollar for her first rabbit and, of course she won the dollar and was a very proud and happy girl, not alone for the money but more so for her success.

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## MRS. GAUDIN VISITS WINNIPEG

ON JUNE 11th, 1903, Mrs. Gaudin left by canoe on her way to Winnipeg. In this her purpose was two-fold. She needed the advice of a doctor for herself as she was far from well, and also to get direct word about the Nelson House children at the Red Deer School.

Irene went with her mother, and I accompanied them as far as the first rapid. After our parting there, she recorded in her diary, "What a great feeling of loneliness swept over me". The trip turned out rather hard and slow, occupying nine days to Norway House, and the canoe men were not as thoughtful of her comfort as they should have been. The sad news came that four of the children at Red Deer had died of tuberculosis, as I have already recorded. The only girl left, Matilda Hart, was sent on to Mrs. Gaudin in Winnipeg. How glad that girl was to be on her way home, away from what to her was a dismal school. Red Deer was soon after closed and a new and brighter school was built in Edmonton.

About the end of July I went to Norway House expecting to meet Mrs. Gaudin on her return but as she was not there I went on to Winnipeg. I arrived on Sunday, and as I had phoned Mrs. Gaudin from Selkirk she met me with a taxi at the station. She looked fine and was very happy that we were to be together for a while in the city and also on the way home. She, with Irene, was staying in the home of a cousin, Mrs. Martin, on Furby Street. On one of the doctor's visits he left his horse and buggy near the curb with the usual

weight attached to the bit. Irene who was just turned seven, evidently thought it was her chance, climbed into the buggy and then hit the horse with the whip. This caused the horse to jump wildly, and the doctor hearing the noise ran out followed by Mrs. Martin. The doctor looked after his horse, and Mrs. Martin said to Irene, "Didn't you know that was a fiery horse?" "I did not know it was a "fire works horse" sobbed Irene. She had been one night previously to see the Fire Works and had got things a bit mixed.

One evening Mrs. Gaudin with Irene and Matilda were at the Young Church prayer meeting. Toward the close of the service the Minister proposed that Irene and Matilda sing something in Cree. During her time in Red Deer Matilda had not been singing in Cree and felt that she could not attempt it, so there was nothing but for Irene to do her best. She stood up and looking upward she sang the Cree Doxology and she was heard throughout the church.

*Mummiche mik Way yo tow wik*

*Mena Jesus Way kew ses sik*

*Mena Kay na tu sit achack*

*Mam mo we yase mum miche mik.*

Thus she sang and then the benediction was pronounced, Irene was the centre of attraction for a time and she certainly had done well for a child. I was not then with them but that is as Mrs. Gaudin related the story to me.

But the time soon came when we had to say farewells to Winnipeg friends and start on the seven hundred miles of our home journey. At Nelson House Ida and baby May were awaiting our return. During our absence the two children were in the care of Mrs. McRae, a native woman, *Tosis* (Auntie) as we called her.

I pass over the boat journey down Lake Winnipeg to Norway House and Rossville Mission. There came the regular provision for the three hundred miles by canoe down the Nelson River, provisions for four of us and rations for our two canoe men. All being completed we were on our way in good time. At Cross Lake Mission we made a pleasant call on Rev. Edward and Mrs. Paupanekis. They were natives and the kindest of people to be found anywhere. Their home was always a welcome place on our way through Cross Lake. Our ten days trip passed along without any mishap, and on our arrival we found our dear little ones well and happy under Tosis' kind care, with supervision over them by our ever true friend Mrs. Stout.

Many duties awaited our attention. Our supplies had arrived in our absence and had to be unpacked and put away in order ready for use as needed during the year. Household cares had their claims on Mrs. Gaudin's time. Then, cases of sickness were often treated in our home. A boatman had his leg badly injured on a York boat trip. He was brought home in bad condition. Where could they take him but to the Mission, and there he received the best of care until well enough to go to his own home. During his time at the Mission he was skilfully and kindly treated, his food provided from our comparatively limited supplies but we gave and trusted that our needs would be met. There usually were white fish, and in their season moose and deer, and we are in care of Him whom we serve and in this faith we never hesitated when real need came knocking at our door. Thus we carried on through the years, living and acting to serve.

In August, after our return from Winnipeg, we had a very pleasant visit from the Superintendent of Indian Missions, Rev. Dr. John McDougall, accompanied by his wife and their youngest boy, Douglas. Up to that date Mrs. McDougall was

probably the first white woman to visit Nelson House. Such visits were few and far between and were very welcome. The party was with us three days, and the Doctor conducted four services. He was a distinguished Indian Missionary and was known as the most eloquent Cree speaker of his time, probably of all time. In one of these services an Indian baby was baptized and Dr. McDougall named it after his son Douglas. This caused a good deal of merriment among the younger portion of the congregation. The name they thought funny, as the Company happened to have a little dog of that name. During Dr. McDougall's visit there was great excitement over an Indian story of a supernatural person having been seen in the woods back of the Hudson's Bay Company Post. The Indians so believed the story that they would not go near the place. "Do you believe this story?" said the Doctor to me. "I sure do not", was my reply. "Neither do I", said he. The party left for Oxford House Mission, God's Lake and Island Lake, then back for Norway House on their way out.

At this time we had for a short period a very interesting visitor, Mr. Dowling of the staff of the Geological Survey. He had travelled in by way of Saskatchewan, crossed the Churchill River and had come down the Burntwood River to Nelson House. These men endured great hardships in the performance of their work gathering information that the Geography and resources of the country might be better known.

Referring again to the Nelson House Indians' claim of a supernatural person having been seen in the woods during Dr. McDougall's visit there in the summer of 1903, I was told the following story by Mr. A. Stout. Some years before he was in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company store at Poplar River.



"It was reported by the Indians there that a *Weet ta go* (an evil spirit) had been seen in the wood, and fear and excitement ran high so that the Indians remained in their houses, refusing to do any work. Mr. Stout said, "I thought I would put an end to this foolishness and announced that I was going to shoot the *Weet ta go*. Many begged me not to attempt such a thing and Mrs. Stout joined in with the others, but I took my rifle and off I went into the woods and soon shot. Then I hid. In a little while Mrs. Stout and another white woman came on the scene. One had a big knife in her hand, and the other carried a Bible. They said, "Here is where he shot off his rifle, and now he is gone. The *Weet ta go* must have got him". With that I began to laugh. We then returned to the house. The women felt ashamed but it put an end to the Indian excitement for that time".

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## CHAPTER 23

### A SCHOOL HOUSE AND INDIAN ATTITUDES

**F**OR SOME YEARS at Nelson House I had been teaching the children, sometimes in the church and again in the kitchen, according to the condition of the weather. When it became very cold I moved the school group from the church to our kitchen, thus saving firewood. On account of this I considered it was high time we should have a school house. I, therefore, brought it to the attention of the Indians and found a number willing to give free labor on condition they should be fed. To this I agreed, and I also worked with them in the woods, and we soon had enough logs cut and hewed for the body of the school house. To convey this material to the Mission I was given the use of two York boats, and a sufficient number of men volunteered to bring the logs, and in this way they were soon on the site we had chosen. An Indian carpenter, John Angus, assisted me with the body of the house and the pole roof. The roof had to be mudded and covered with double tiers of lengthy spruce bark in lieu of shingles and to make the building habitable the walls also had to be well mudded on both sides. This important work was later brought before the men but as the time was late it was not favorably considered. The hunters with their families were already off for the winter and those who remained were busy putting finishing touches of mud to their own houses and all were preparing to leave soon for the fall fishing. I offered to pay in clothing, but there was no response. After we left the church, a man and his wife, as was common, came in for a talk. After he and his wife had received a good cup of tea and some eats, Mrs. Gaudin tried her per-

suasion with the result that he promised, with a grown up son, to stand by the work till the mudding was finished and my good wife won out. He proved as good as his word. Two other men joined in and by the end of the week they had mudded the roof and the walls inside and out. Then came a set-back. A rain storm, the last of the season, set in and a regular downpour continued for two days. Oh! how that mud did melt and run from the roof and walls till by the time the storm was over not much was left. The weather then turned cold, but we were not to be beaten. The two men had left, but Amos and his son continued faithful. I got them again to work myself joining in with them. We used hot water in mixing the mud and in which to bathe our hands when chilled with the cold, for the hand is the only tool with which the mud is put on. We thus again went over the roof and walls, and then covered the roof with bark which finished that part of the work.

Amos and his son, with their families, then hastened away to where they expected to procure a supply of fish to help out in their winter's food. I continued the work, making the door casing and putting in the windows. After a time, with the help of a man now and again, the floor was laid, and by Christmas the school house was ready for use, and in it after the New Year I opened school. I had made a few seats and provided a chair and little table, and felt very pleased with our success. During the winter there were fifteen children in attendance, five of these coming from our own home, Irene, Ida and three little Indian boys. Under my guidance, the Indians with grub hoes had broken up a good sized plot of ground in which potatoes were planted for school purposes. This was a kind of make shift. The Department of Indian Affairs provides every treaty child attending school with two biscuits each day, but at that time

such provision was not available, so here was where the potatoes came in. We had a good crop which was stored in the Mission cellar, and when school opened each child received a pound for each day at school-weighed out on Friday at close of school, and that was our make shift in lieu of biscuits.

Now the question of school wood became a difficulty. An Indian had brought to the school a dog-sled load of wood of nine foot lengths. On Sunday, at the close of the sermon, I spoke of this and said I did not approve of wood being brought and not made ready for the stove. On Monday a wood bee was in operation, really inspired by Mr. Stout who supplied two trains of dogs and two men. Some were cutting in the woods, others were hauling, while two men were cutting into stove lengths. One of these called out that he wished to speak to me. "Did you say yesterday that you did not approve of the wood that a man brought to the school", he asked. "Yes", said I, "I did say that, as it was not cut up". "That's strange, I would appreciate it if a load of wood was brought to my door". "I would too, if it were brought to my door", I answered, "but that is not my door, that is the school door for your children". Then they tried another tack. "Look", said the other, "the Company's manager is boss in everything in his work, and because of that he pays for any work we do. Now you are boss over here, and so any one working here you should pay them". To this I answered, "I do pay you when you work for me, but not for your church or school. You see the Company sends out many large bales of fur every year, but do you ever see me sending out anything to make money? You see me bringing in a great deal and much of it goes out in various ways to you. Another thing, I teach your children in school without receiving any pay for it". "Do you mean to say you

are not paid for teaching the school?" questioned one. "Not one cent", I again affirmed, "and it is just the same with Mrs. Gaudin in all she does for your sick who are often brought into our home, she also receives no pay". "Well then, all we can say is that you are both very foolish to be doing so much for nothing", they both declared. "No my friends", I said, "You are wrong in that. We are here to help you people in whatever way we can and as much as we can, and are very happy in doing it". That finished their questions that time. This, however, is but a sample of the Indian's misconception as to missionary life and service.

From a point a mile across the lake an Indian came late one evening very hurriedly for Mrs. Gaudin. A boy there had been very badly bitten by a savage dog. We at once started over in our own canoe. We found that the boy had been very badly torn on the under side of his hip which required many stitches to close. We learned how the trouble had happened. A woman coming from the *O twa hoo win* by canoe was followed along the shore by her four dogs which were strong and full of life. A number of boys had been swimming and the boy who became injured had just come ashore as the dogs were passing. One of the brutes fastened on the naked boy and went wild at the taste of blood. Hearing his cries a number of women led by the mother, ran to his assistance, but though they beat the animal over the head, it would not give up its hold till the mother with her hands pulled its jaws apart and thus freed her boy from his terrible position. The Indians shot the entire train as also the mother dog from which they were bred. The next morning we took over a stretcher on which the boy was carried down and placed across the thwarts of the canoe and we thus brought him over to the Mission to be near for treatment. His mother and some of her friends followed and put up their tent just

outside of our picket fence. There they remained till the boy was sufficiently recovered to be taken home. I may mention here that the dogs were killed for two reasons: First that the dogs would commit no further mischief which could not be found fault with, but the second reason for getting rid of the dog is mixed with superstition as the Indian believes that the recovery of the injured would be hindered if the dogs were allowed to live.

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## CHAPTER 24

### THE NELSON HOUSE INDIANS LED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE CHURCH

**F**OR YEARS it had been common among the Indians to give very small amounts to the Missionary Society. A woman might give a common pair of moccasins worth only fifty cents, and if a good hunter contributed one dollar he thought he was doing a very worthy deed. As fur prices increased, as also the fur bearing animals on their trapping grounds, I considered their givings should also be increased. I had learned how much each man could well be expected to give and prepared a statement accordingly. In this list I entered the names of all the men living near, and opposite each name the amount I thought he could reasonably give. The next Sunday I announced what I had done, and said, "If you want to know the amount I have put down to your name, come to the house and you will be told". At this many came in, and the general question asked was, "What amount have you put me down for?" The amounts ran from three to ten dollars and in every case the man concerned cheerfully answered "*A-ko-san-ce*" (That's all right). The following Christmas the far-away hunters came in and we had a great time in the church. I gave that morning what the Indian is thought incapable of understanding, a missionary address on China in such a way as was suited to the Indian mind. Then as a fine finish every last man announced his subscription as fast as I could write and, with what had been given earlier, we had \$200 promised. After this was finished in the church, one of the men remarked, "Well China went for us

this morning", showing the address had meant something to him.

The people attending church from a distance brought their lunches with them, most of them eating in the kitchen, but others ate at one side in our dining room where a tarpaulin was spread out for their convenience while eating. At the same time we were at our table having our lunch. Thus, as our habit was, we were in very friendly relations with our native people. Among those eating on the tarpaulin was an elderly man with a grown up son and also grandchildren. One of these latter was the boy who had been injured by the dog. For his recovery the grandfather gave a thank-offering, and others called out further amounts, and this without any suggestion from me till they there had given in all \$20. They seemed to have developed a great joy in giving. The following week the manager of the Hudson's Bay Company local store gave me a cheque for \$220., which was placed to the respective accounts though most of the subscribers may have been in debt. This method of an Indian paying his subscription in debt was the next year withdrawn by the Chief Factor in charge of the District. By his ruling an Indian could pay an offering to the Church only when he had a credit on his account. This was of no value to the church, as the Indian usually remained in debt till the trapping season closed. I then was obliged to receive fur directly from the trapper for his givings.

On one occasion a band of trappers, on their way to the Company's store, arrived first at the Mission. Every man opened his pack and gave me a large beaver pelt for the Church. Mrs. Gaudin, in the meantime, was preparing a lunch for all hands, fresh Biscuits and as much good tea as they wished to drink. We had a joyous time and felt we



were winning out. The next day going over to the Fort, the Manager said, "Why were you keeping those Indians so long over there at the Mission yesterday?" "I wanted to get their fur to close their accounts". "Mr. Stout", I said, "who are the men you can best trust, those who are in close touch with us, or those who pass by at the far side of the lake and come not near the Mission?" His answer was, "I can best trust those who are friendly at the Mission". On my return home I retold the story to Mrs. Gaudin, and we rejoiced together consecrating ourselves afresh to an unstinted service among our people.

A beaver skin at that time was valued at five dollars. From all fur givings I had a list amounting to \$100. which I turned over to the Hudson's Bay Company. I might have received a much better price elsewhere, but in the interest of quietness and friendship I took the course I did, and had no regrets.

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## CHAPTER 25

### ANOTHER JOURNEY TO WINNIPEG

TOWARD THE END of March, 1904, our three children contracted Scarlet Fever. When the fever subsided they were soon up and around but when we both happened to be away Irene and Ida went out and around through damp snow getting their feet wet through their moccasins, and remained in that condition until their mother came home. From this they developed Bright's disease. Both had it very badly but especially so in Irene's case. Their bodies and faces were so swollen that they were hardly recognizable. We were for days very much alarmed about Irene. On seeing her mother weeping, she said, "Don't cry, mother, if Jesus wants me I am willing to go". Finally her worst symptoms began slowly to subside bringing hope for her recovery. As she recovered she wanted her feet and legs rubbed almost continually so that we employed a nearby native woman for this. The woman becoming weary snoozed which annoyed Irene very much.

As soon as open water with warmer weather came their mother prepared to take them into Winnipeg for Medical advice. I accompanied them on the canoe trip to Norway House. From there the twenty-two miles to the Landing was by tug and then by large boat to Selkirk. After having the children treated in Winnipeg she went on with them to Eau Claire, Wisconsin, to the home of her sister, Mrs. Anderson, whom she had not seen for eleven years. There she was interviewed by reporters, and interesting articles were published. The children continued to improve under skilful medical treatment till fully restored.

In course of time I again arrived at Norway House, this

time on my way to Winnipeg. My two canoe men I provided for at the Landing to await our return.

Mrs. Gaudin and the children were already in Winnipeg where we spent some time together. We then came on to Selkirk to await the next sailing of the Premier. While we waited we made our abode in the Riverside Boarding Inn. Here we had the pleasure of again meeting Rev. John Semmens who had married us at Norway House, June 22nd, 1895. Years before he had been the first missionary at Nelson House for two years, and then some years at Norway House, where he built a church and parsonage that succeeded those built by James Evans. Mr. Semmens had also been for years Chairman of the Lake Winnipeg Indian District. We also had the pleasure of meeting for the first time Archdeacon Phair a devoted clergyman of the Anglican Church. We often met him in after years and heard his testimony in the Pentecostal Church which he often attended.

When we arrived at Warren's Landing we found our two men ready and waiting for our coming, and we were soon on our way for Norway House with our canoe as our conveyance. Mrs. Gaudin and the children were sitting somewhat toward the back of the canoe while beyond the centre was a large trunk and other baggage. When some few miles on our way trouble began to develop. Ida was sitting on her mother's right by the side of the canoe. Soon she complained of becoming wet. It was at first thought it was from the spray that was flying, but again she said, "Mamma I am getting real wet." On examination a split was found in the side of the canoe through which a stream of water was flowing making already a depth of water in the centre of the canoe reaching toward the trunk and baggage. This began to be serious and a strong breeze from the wide lake increased the difficulty. Our canoe already low enough down from our load was now approaching the danger point. The men, well

aware of the danger began putting all their strength into their paddles in addition to the sail, and were doing their best to reach the nearest island but there were many reefs and rocks around which passage had to be made, thus making the distance greater. When we reached the island our canoe was nearly level with the water surface. As the water became shallow the men jumped out and pulled the canoe till the bow rested on the smooth shore. They then lifted the children out and helped Mrs. Gaudin from the flooded canoe. As it was being drawn further on the shore the water poured out over the stern in a real flood. Everything was soaked, but how thankful we were to be safe. The children were gathered in their mother's arms in her joy that we had escaped. When we opened the trunk we found the contents were soaked half way. We spent some hours drying all this as also the quilts and tarpaulin used in the canoe till the bushes were "ornamented" in all directions. When the drying operation was finished and the canoe repaired, we again went on our way, and arrived at Rossville Mission in fairly good time, very thankful, and not much the worse for our unfortunate experience.

The next day we began preparation for a lengthy trip as we were taking the York boat route, down the Nelson, crossing a corner of Split Lake, then up the Burntwood River, thus escaping the long portages and muskegs of the canoe route. The men had the usual ration for such a journey. Our lunch box was well supplied with varieties of food for the ten days journey. In the North, Autumn temperatures often drop very suddenly. The day we left Winnipeg mosquitoes were in evidence, but before we reached Nelson House ice was forming on our paddles and on the sides of our canoe. It is true we had some moderately warm weather following the cold snap. When about a day from

home we came to where a few families of our Nelson people were camped. They gave us some white fish and dried moose meat, and we in return gave them some of our lunch. "A fair exchange is no robbery".

After returning home from such a trip it takes some little time to get settled down to the regular routine of our lives. The next day we took a run over to the Hudson's Bay people, the Isbisters. Our old friends, the Stouts had retired in the early summer and had settled a few miles north of Selkirk. We missed them, but fell in line with their successors. Mrs. Isbister was a native of Split Lake but one of the finest of her race.

One thing that first engaged our attention was to gather in and store the produce of our garden. This gave us a very fine and important food supply for ourselves and also for the Indian children under our care. Then by the beginning of October came preparation for the fall fishing for we needed a supply of at least 4,000 fish, some for food for ourselves but many more for our sleigh dogs which was important, for the care of our dogs was as needful as was the care of the old Ontario driving horses. Nets had to be made by some Indian women and "backed" and others mended. The man who was to do the fishing did the backing of the new nets. Some of these were for the smaller fish, as the tulibeas, and others for the larger white fish. The "run" of the fish continued for about one month and during that time all the people were absent from their homes, all busy in the important work, some times by night as well as by day, providing food first for their families and then for the dogs. This, for the time, made school impossible. Even the services were temporarily suspended. Early in November, however, the fishing was over and the families returned to their homes, and church and school had again taken up their usual work.

## CHAPTER 26

### AN EXPERIENCE AT CROSS LAKE

**E**ARLY IN THE MONTH of August, 1905, I arrived at Cross Lake Mission on my way to Norway House. Though it was Saturday I had intended going right on, but as the Chairman of the District, Rev. Thompson Ferrier, urged me to remain over Sunday for the dedication of the new church I agreed to do so. I was also to act as interpreter for the services, a by-no-means easy task.

My first duty Sunday morning was to interpret into Cree, sentence by sentence, the form for the dedication of a church as read by Mr. Ferrier from the Ritual. After the Dedication came the chairman's sermon which I found fairly easy to interpret. In the afternoon Mr. Sellers was the preacher. He began as if he were addressing a city congregation. This makes it very hard to interpret as one has the feeling of putting over something which he knows has but little meaning for the Indians. Mr. Sellers, however, finally seemed to realize that he was speaking to Indians, and did much better. In the evening a platform service was held. Two Indians were the first speakers and did very well. Then the three Ministers took their turns, each to speak about ten minutes. Mr. Ferrier spoke first and made an uncommon request that I would interpret his address after he finished speaking. After I had finished with this address, Mr. Sellers made the same request and was followed in the same way by Mr. McNeill and with him my strenuous day was at an end. I received many kind expressions from two pioneer Scotchmen well versed in Cree. "You have done fine to-day", was their

kind comment. "We never imagined you could interpret so well".

The following day Mr. Ferrier proposed that we should move to Norway House, as soon as possible to take up the missionary work there. It was at that time considered a critical work, and he gave me credit as best able to meet the situation. I opposed this move but he persisted and publicly announced it on the Cross Lake Treaty grounds. However, arriving on my trip at Norway House the move was postponed to the next year. Accordingly by our last packet in early April I received instruction to prepare for the move to Norway House, and it was suggested that I should bring to the Residential School there, as many children as I could procure. We carried out these instructions, and, in spite of the Red Deer school misfortune, the Nelson House people gave us ten children on the condition that we were to be at Norway House where we could exercise care over them. Our packed cases were shipped out by the York boats, while we, a party of twenty-two, travelled in two large canoes.

On arriving at Cross Lake we found arrangements had been changed, and instead of Norway House we were to be stationed at Cross Lake. To this change we submitted without a complaint. The Cross Lake people were delighted to have as missionaries those who could speak their language like themselves. I went on to Norway House with the ten children for the school but I felt when the boats arrived there would be trouble, as the conditions on which they gave their children were not being fulfilled, and so it was. Every child whose father was in the boats was taken back home. Four were left though three cried to go, but there was no one with the right to take them, and again there was disaster for two were in their graves before Christmas, and the third, a boy,

was saved only through Mrs. Gaudin bringing him to be with us at Cross Lake. She had gone on a nursing call to Mrs. Lousley at the Mission, and brought back with her this boy, Alfred Moore, wrapped up at her feet at the front of her carriage. He was in very poor health at the school for he was unhappy especially after the death of his sister, and was said to almost never laugh. With us he was so happy that his health began to improve, and on the following summer with his return to his home at Nelson House he built up very quickly, and is at this date of writing a strong man, married and with a family of his own.

Since the time of these children a very fine large school has been built by the Department of Indian Affairs, well lighted with healthful dormitories. The smaller children are given plenty of time for play, as they attend school only half a day. This is a much better condition for their health.

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## CHAPTER 27

### A NEW LIFE AT NELSON HOUSE

**D**URING THE WINTER of 1905, there began a wonderful revival among the people of Nelson House. The starting place was with myself in union with the Holy Spirit who began to work mightily among the people, and they said, "The Missionary has been reconverted", and they began to come to the Mission to hear of this wonderful thing that they were told was for them as well as for the Missionary, and this became the great theme on all occasions. The Sunday services were times when the power of the Spirit seemed to rest upon young and old alike, melting their hearts and transforming them into a broken and weeping congregation. Many began to confess their sin, yet there was nothing in the preaching that would be called excitement, but just the strong power of the Spirit that was moving in the hearts of the people. The movement bore all the characteristics of reality. Our Wednesday prayer service changed from a few people to a full congregation, not that we urged it but just because they were drawn to come. We also held three services a week at as many points, at each of which several families were settled, and these little services were well attended. Many left their work to be present where they felt God was in their midst. This great movement continued unabated till the following June when we left Nelson House for Cross Lake. We had not sought the change but that was the will of the Church officers and so we moved. For years there seemed to be no other place like Nelson House to us, our first home; where we had given our best, and where five of our little ones had been born. Our last there, was a little girl born February 28th, 1905. We named her Edith Josephine, but she was always called just Joe.

## CHAPTER 28

### LEAVING NELSON HOUSE

**I**T WAS WITH REAL REGRET that we parted from the work and people of Nelson House. Fifteen years of labor, in eleven of which Mrs. Gaudin had shared, and where five of our children had been born, had endeared to us both place and people. We had been with them through the joys and sorrows of their lives. Many who at the beginning of those years had welcomed us to their midst, we had seen pass on to God. We had seen boys and girls mature, marry and then bring their children to church and school.

Our last Sunday with them was a great day. The church was crowded to its utmost capacity. In the morning service five promising young people were received into the church. During this last year God had been with us in a wonderful way and these young people, having been led to accept Christ, desired to unite with the Church. In the afternoon the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was preceded by a great testimony meeting. It was a wonderful time. Scores took part and all had the ring of the pure coin. Often two or three were on their feet waiting their turn to speak. The entire service was, indeed, a wonderful time enjoyed by all.

And now as to Cross Lake Mission where we were two terms, in all twenty years. It is sixty miles north of Norway House with canoe travel down a branch of the Nelson River. The Mission is not situated on the lake proper but on a small expansion of the river between the two parts of Cross Lake. A short distance north of the Mission the real Cross Lake stretches east, north and west some forty miles in extent.

The Nelson River in its course north flows across the lake and from this the Indians call it *Pim-miche-ku-mow* (water flowing across), which gave this great inland lake the name Cross Lake.

The Hudson's Bay Company trading post is adjacent to the Mission, to the west. A short distance beyond was the Hyer's trading store and dwelling operated by Mr. Donald McIvor. Then to the south about a mile distant is the Roman Catholic Mission with either a day or boarding school.

We took up our work in the summer of 1906. We found the parsonage to be in great need of repair which meant very much labor before it could be made comfortable for the winter. The wind made its way freely through many places in the outer walls. The clapboarding had to be removed and three thicknesses of tar paper put on as we went on with the fresh boarding. Both gables were taken out and straightened. New and larger windows were put in down stairs, the old ones taking the place of one sash windows upstairs. The front door was removed from the centre and another opening made near the corner where a modern door was installed to suit the position of a new stairs which was afterwards built. In course of time the old partitions were torn down up stairs as well as below, and rebuilt in accord with our plan for the house, below stairs having living room and dining room with sliding doors between. In the kitchen there were only mudded walls with two one sash windows. This received final attention. We had it boarded and ceiled, with three full sized windows put in. A partition also was put in lengthwise at one side with room for a pantry at one end of the passage way and the other end made a good-sized medicine room which was Mrs. Gaudin's special domain. Throughout the house all the furnishing work was largely

by Mrs. Gaudin's hands. Before being papered the walls were covered with grey cotton pasted on. Then dining room, hall and study were completed with painted burlap topped with an oak finish. We then had a warm, comfortable home and by no means devoid of beauty.

In the early winter of 1906, our first at Cross Lake, our little Anna May was taken ill with throat trouble which developed into diphtheria and on the 2nd of December, after twelve days of sickness, she passed away at the age of five years and a few months, leaving a great vacancy in our family circle.

We took every precaution to save our other children from contagion. A house was kindly supplied by Mr. McIvor, a free trader, where they were under the care of Tosis and our teacher, Miss Annie Foster. They remained there till after our house had been well disinfected. But early in June Ida was taken with the same trouble and after fifteen days she too passed away. Shortly before her passing she said, "Mamma, I can't get better", and to her mother's question, she answered, "Yes, I am trusting Jesus". She was nine years and seven months of age. He was also our refuge in that time of need.

As soon as we could make preparation for travelling we left for Ontario and further East. We thought it wise to leave Cross Lake for a time, feeling assured that the change would be beneficial to Mrs. Gaudin after the strain she had been under, and also safer for the children. At that time Nelson was but little more than a month old, having been born on the 24th day of May.

The season that spring was very backward. Much ice continued on the northern lakes throughout the month of June. We arrived at Warren's Landing the first of July and

ice was still visible out on the lake. We waited for the second trip of the Premier. We learned on her arrival that she had been damaged on her first trip pushing her way through the ice, and had to go on dry dock for repairs, thus the delay. On our way out, floes were still to be seen at one side of our course.

We travelled from Port Arthur to Owen Sound by C.P.R. boat. In Toronto we were again guests at the Stephenson's home. They were very sympathetic to us after our recent trouble. In their home baby Nelson was christened by Rev. Dr. Sutherland, General Secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society, and Nelson was honored by receiving the name of the worthy doctor and was named Nelson Sutherland.

After visiting our many friends we set out on our return trip toward Cross Lake. My mother, at her own decision, was going with us. She was well on in her 82nd year, but was very happy to be going to live with us for her last days, and we were very glad to have her. She enjoyed being on the large boat to Port Arthur, but when it came to the train, mother would have nothing to do with a sleeper as she said she would "smother in such a place", so I sat with her in a passenger coach where she slept now and again. Then came the boat journey down Lake Winnipeg, a new experience to mother but one she also enjoyed very much. At Norway House was a time of waiting, while I first took a canoe trip to Cross Lake to procure a York boat with a crew of men. This was necessary as the only way to take down the furniture which we had brought out from Winnipeg. We arrived at Cross Lake Monday morning having been detained on the way by high wind and snow. The nine men for the crew of a York boat were speedily got together, and next day we started for Norway House. As it required fifteen men to haul the boats over the first two portages, we stayed

with the men to help, and a priest with two men happened to come along and they helped, and so the difficulty was overcome. The following day the boat arrived, and the next day we got loaded up, leaving in the afternoon. The Hudson's Bay Company claimed half the boat space for their freight but we had enough room left to meet our needs. We had our places toward the stern of the boat. A nurse from the Boarding School, a Miss Green, was able to be with us for the winter, as our little Edith Josephine had been very ill at Norway House and was in the care of the nurse, and Nelson was but a small baby. My mother in her younger days had been accustomed to the boats in the Restigouche River so she enjoyed very much the trip in the York boat. Even running the rapids was to her a pleasant diversion. We spent one night on the way. Arriving at Cross Lake we spent our first night in Mr. McIvor's vacant house. The next day the Mission house was well ventilated and made ready with the new furniture installed. Mr. McIvor assisted mother to the house, and even carried a chair that she might have rests along the way. She appreciated every kindness and was very happy with us on what became the last year of her life. Mother's hearing was not very good but she had no difficulty in hearing us. She enjoyed our family devotions very much and always sat near to get every word. Her death was hastened by a fall which resulted in a break above the ankle. Mrs. Gaudin set the broken limb enclosing it in a cast with the skill of a doctor. Though the bone healed well she never walked again, and from this lack of movement dropsy developed, and our beloved mother passed away, July 22, 1908 in her 83rd year. She was quite happy to go and during a couple of weeks often spoke of it. She said, "My children I have been very happy with you here but now I want to go home", just as though she were going from one room to

another. Her last words to me were the same she had often used, "My dear boy", as she patted my cheek. We laid her away to rest beside our little ones Katherine Ida and Anna May. She was left a widow at forty-six years of age. She had been a wonderful mother, devoted to the welfare of her seven children. Surely happy are the children who have been blessed in having such a Christian mother.

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## CHAPTER 29

### SOME RESULTS OF MISSION WORK AMONG THE CREE INDIANS OF FOUR MISSIONS

**A**FTER THE MANY YEARS which Mrs. Gaudin and I spent among the Cree Indians of the North, I should be able to say something as to the results of missionary work among them.

There cannot well be any question but that the religious and spiritual have a first place in all true mission work, and nowhere perhaps has this been and is still more needed than among our Indian people. The wonderful task of the missionaries is to lead them to see with opened eyes, not what they might do but what Christ has done for them and is now able to do in them. This Gospel message is very different from mere ethical teaching: different as the sunshine is from darkness. Apart from this saving message mission work would scarcely be worth while. Christ's commission is our only mandate for mission service the whole world over. The great Apostle, Paul, declared that the preaching of the Cross was the work, the only work, he had been called to do. We should be earnest in this. Life is short, and opportunities pass quickly. Most of the Indian people whom I first met in 1890 have passed on. Many of these, through the early preaching of the old Gospel had been led to accept the Christian way of life. As they were slipping away from this earthly life the beautiful picture of the Father's house brought comfort and solace in that hour of need. They had been transformed from the old to the new life which had become manifested in their "going out and their coming in".



One evening, at Nelson House, I was walking with a Hudson's Bay man who was there from Norway House. Outside of the Company's picket fence were encamped in tepees quite a large number of Christian Indians. All at once we heard singing from one of the tepees, and it spread from one to the other until the whole encampment was united in songs of praise. Then prayer began from one tent to another till the entire people were engaged in prayer. At this time the Hudson's Bay man said, "I was here some years ago, and we then heard from such an encampment the sound of the conjurer's drum, and now instead we hear the praises of God. My! what a change has taken place".

Now as to the distant school education for Indian children:—Among most of the far distant bands such education becomes almost useless, at least as we see it. From some of these far-away people a few children attended one of our Residential schools. They were fairly clever, some very much so, both in their school studies and also in the general work they were taught to do. Usually when they graduated at eighteen years of age there was nothing for them but to return to the old nomadic life of their people, from which they had been taken. In that life there is but small opportunity to put into use the education they receive in the school. No wonder that in course of time they could scarcely be distinguished from the other young people of the band who perhaps had never even seen the inside of a school.

A concrete case was that of a young girl who had spent the allotted time in the Brandon School, and on graduation was returning to her home on a remote Reserve. Her way led through Beren's River, and there for a time she stayed at the Mission. The missionary people considered her a fine girl who spoke English well and was a good clean worker.

They, however, did not need her and she went on to her own people. In course of time this girl so deteriorated that she could hardly be distinguished from the rest of her people.

But a number of graduates from the Norway House Residential School instead of going back to their distant Reserves went out. Some boys found work on farms and have done well, and an occasional girl found house work. One such, from Oxford House, I have lately met married to an industrious, kind husband. She has a little girl and a good home.

One of these graduates, originally from God's Lake, has been working in Manitoba for some years. On one occasion I met him in Winnipeg. He had come in with a car load of cattle from the farm on which he was working. He had put up at the Y.M.C.A. where he had taken a room. He then had treated himself to a good bath. This indicates a good ideal for a native youth. We had the pleasure of a visit from Jonas in our home at Transcona. A couple of years ago, for his own interest and instruction he took a trip as far as Halifax, spending some time at a number of places of special interest. During this time we had a fine letter from him. Jonas has rather an uncommon surname, Yellowback.

But there may be a home condition that will encourage education: On Reserves where a general improvement in conditions has taken place, where the people have a more settled way of making a living and where each family has a home, education may be of real value whether obtained from a Reserve or a Residential School. Among the more settled places I may mention Fisher River, Norway House and in a lesser degree, Cross Lake and Nelson House.

The present Fisher River people are descended from a number of families who were moved there from Norway



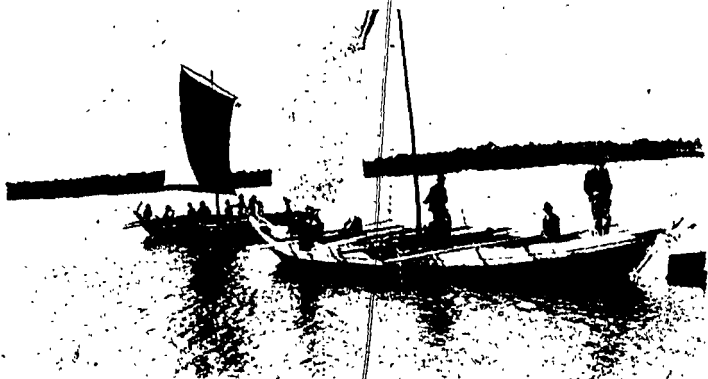
*Nelson House as it is  
today.*



*John Angus Donkey—old York  
boatman and carpenter.  
Friend of every mission-  
ary from the beginning  
of the work.*



*Felix Moody, born at Norway House,  
baptized by James Evans; came to  
Nelson House with the first missionary.*



*A York boat, manned by a crew of nine, used fifteen years ago at Nelson House.*



*The old people of Nelson House who built the first church. They all remembered the first missionaries and one man (x) was married by John McDougall.*

House some years after James Evans' time. It has been sometimes said that they were the most progressive people of their time, who desired this change. In point of civilization they have advantages that the people living further north do not have. The people of Fisher River, I understand, make their living by fishing and from the land rather than from fur as the people of the North are compelled to do.

It is true, I have never been at Fisher River but I have had information from various sources. Our daughter Esther taught school there part of two years. They have a graded school of two rooms at which the children are in regular attendance. Miss Margarette Stevens was one of the teachers for the last six years, part of which time she was Principal. The people are said in general to have clean homes and do but little wandering. They have both horses and cattle, and are provided by the Department with mowing machines and rakes. They have large tracts of wild hay land and put up sufficient for their stock with a surplus for sale. Esther tells of a native wedding to which all the Mission folk were invited. The home was scrupulously clean and very well appointed. The table was spread with a spotlessly clean cloth and dishes to match with a goodly variety of food and fruit. It was simply wonderful in a native home. Practically all the people speak English. Dr. F. G. Stevens, Chairman of the Norway House District, was missionary at the Fisher River Station for thirty-five years retiring at the last Conference of 1940.

On one of the occasions that Mrs. Gaudin and I attended service in Wesley Pentecostal church, a number of the Fisher River men with their wives were in attendance. From the platform they sang several hymns, one in Cree, all of which were to their credit.

Rossville, the mother church of the United Missions of the North, established in 1840 by Rev. James Evans, was the only church for at least sixty years. Since that time two other churches have taken up work, the Church of England to meet the needs of a number of their people who moved from the vicinity of York Factory on the Hudson's Bay coast. The Roman Catholics came much later.

The treaty Indians of Norway House number about 650, scattered over an extensive Reserve. The people of mixed blood numbered at least 100, and the whites about half that number. There are four day schools, one of which is Public, the others under their respective denominations, but under the direction of the Indian Agent for the Department of Indian Affairs. There are also two Residential Schools. One built by the Department of Indian Affairs at Rossville has accommodation for 105 Indian children who come from the various Reserves. This school is under the United Church which appoints the Principal and the members of the staff.

The homes on the Reserve are fairly good, some very much so, and for the most part clean. Some of this likely results from training received in the Boarding School, though some of the cleanest homes were kept by women of pure Indian blood who had just a natural instinct for cleanliness. How is it that you are such a good housekeeper? I asked a very fine Christian woman whose home was near the Landing. "Oh!" she answered, "I worked for a Company woman and I have followed what I learned from her". Everything was so clean and well kept that staying with them over night, I slept in one of her beds, the only occasion for me to occupy a native bed throughout all my years in the North.

Some years ago while at Norway House I was present

at an Indian Council in which the chief and other natives were asking the Indian Agent to appeal to the Government to obtain for them a pair of horses. A very industrious and independent Indian was present and expressed himself after this manner, "Why are you asking the Government for horses? I have two good horses and I bought and paid for them myself. If I could do that surely more so could you by helping one another do the same and not bother the Government". The Indian Agent thought the same and did not recommend the Chief's request. This shows the difference between an independent Indian and one of the other type.

The native people of Norway House are very faithful in their church attendance, and, in the absence of the missionary, there are always some of them who can acceptably take a service.

Cross Lake was without an ordained missionary up to 1895, when Rev. Edward Paupanekis entered on his term there. We followed Rev. Archie McNeill who retired from the Indian work in 1906, and our first term there continued sixteen years. We found the people generally in a backward condition, in religion, morals, education and home life. Many were very poor. To this condition there were some notable exceptions. During the previous six years nearly half of the people had gone over to the Roman Catholic church and some others were preparing to go. Many of those still remaining in our church seemed to be held by other considerations than by belief and loyalty to their religion. They also had but little sense of the distinction between the two religions.

After studying the situation I began to emphasize religious education from both the spiritual and Protestant aspects. This I followed up at every reasonable opportunity. In the

church services the Scripture was explained and emphasized, and as I met them in our home or by the way education went on, always in a natural way as if it just happened so. Some few white people who wanted to be intimate with the Catholic side were at first annoyed but in time got over it and then became our friends. Mrs. Gaudin had no small part in her way of influencing the white people as well as the Indians. After a number of years of this method, gradually came the evidence of changing lives. Capacity congregations became the common thing and among them would often be a few Catholics.

Watch night services were common to all the churches in the North. One year, however, I held the service New Year's morning instead of the late night meeting. The following winter as the old year was drawing to a close, a large gathering of men discussed the night or morning service pro and con, when a leading man asked, "Would it be too much to have both the Watch night and the New Year's services?" to which I replied "Not too much for me, and I think it would be just fine", and so all agreed for both services. I then urged, "Now all you who voted for the New Year's service be sure you attend the Watch Night service, and again all you who favored the Watch Night be sure you are all present in the New Year's meeting", and this was very finely carried out. We had a wonderful Watch Night gathering. The church was filled with a serious worshipful people of all classes, with quite a number of Catholics present. The service was opened at ten o'clock, and closed with the advent of the New Year, the last few minutes being spent silently. A couple of the leaders spoke very well, and towards the close of the service, in response to my invitation, a very large number quickly arose as an evidence that they desired and purposed to live the Christian life. Again at the morning service of the



New Year a great congregation gathered and we were greatly encouraged as we felt a new heaven was working in the hearts of the people.

In 1930 we returned from Norway House to what proved to be our last four years of service, which we spent in our loved Cross Lake work. These years we considered especially successful and happy. Two items I may mention: I received into the Church forty Catholics, children and adults. Among them were two of the leading men of Cross Lake, one having been Councillor and Chief for some years, the other, quite an artist, had been a school teacher for the Catholics and after joining our church was elected as Chief of the band. During the first of these years I had six marriages, in five of which the brides were Catholic, and not only did I marry them but I received them into our church congregation.

When we retired from Cross Lake and the North we considered that we had not spent twenty years among them in vain, but that we left a people who had become second to none in point of loyalty to their faith and church. When, in 1934, we decided to retire, the people were so grieved at our going that they circulated a petition asking us to remain. This was signed by at least 95 per cent of our people, as well as a large number of Catholics. A woman of that faith put her arms around Mrs. Gaudin, saying, "I thought you were going to live and die with us". We really had intended to return for a couple years more, but Mr. Shoup was without a worthwhile appointment and was offered Cross Lake, which he accepted.

In my last year I must have travelled largely by dog-train at least 700 miles, visiting distant people, some in the vicinity of the Hudson's Bay Railway, some of them distant 125 miles. The people were very kind and helpful. For years when

travelling wandering Indians would follow us, expecting to be fed when we would make a fire, but of late years the tables had changed and they ministered to me wherever I visited. At one point I was located in the home of a Split Lake man married to a Cross Lake woman. They had a large log house, and clean, in which I also held services. They gave me all my meals for the three days I was with them. For breakfast I had toast, from Winnipeg bread, porridge with condensed milk, and bacon and eggs. The other meals were equally good. Then a woman, Betsy Richard, with whom I had stayed on a former visit, brought me a dollar, saying, "when you go back to Picketence station go to a cafe for two meals". One man with his dogs had taken me out the sixteen miles without any charge, and the one who brought me back to the station apologized for accepting pay. Then from a point some nineteen miles distant, which I was not able to visit, an Indian and his wife and boy came by dog-train to meet me, and when the train came in carried my baggage, and when saying good-bye gave me two dollars, saying, "I was not able to help with the foundation of the church, so I am giving this that you may pay some man to take my place." This was a very happy visit. I had preached the Word, baptized the children and married a couple, a white man to a native woman, and she was just as good as he was. I then went on to Wabowden, fifty miles by train. There my man with the dogs was waiting for me. My work was much the same as it was among the people I had just left. Here I also had a wedding, a young Englishman to a half native girl. And now, my work being finished, we started on the fifty miles stretch to Cross Lake and home, and my man, Alexjee, made the run within the day.

I cannot say much about Nelson House as it has been during the succeeding years since we left in 1906, with but

one visit for a few days, in company with Mr. Stevens, in the summer of 1914. That the revival made a great change in many lives is, I believe, without question. Mr. J. T. Blackford, the present missionary, gives his testimony that the older people who went through those times are much better in their lives than those who have come on from a later date. Of these younger ones not much can be said in their favor. Missionaries must continually build themselves up in spiritual life if they would lead their people on to higher things. I am sorry that all have not seemed to be a success in this regard. May God very richly bless all those at present engaged in this great and important work.

Many of the fine men with whom I was associated in the Indian work have passed on to their reward. May the workers of the present take courage, doing their best for the people and the Master whose they are and whom they serve.

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## CHAPTER 30

### MORE INDIAN STORIES

**E**DWARD HART and his wife were natives of Nelson House. For a number of years Edward had worked in the York boats and was one of the strongest men in the brigade. His wife, Margaret, was emotional and comic, enjoying a good laugh. She was very kind in her way. They were both Christians and members of the Church.

Their home was at *Waw pa seek* (a channel), a point twenty-five miles distant from the Mission. It was their custom to come to the Company's about once a month on a Saturday and remain over Sunday to attend Church. After the services they would come into the Mission and we would have a pleasant visit together. This, of course, had to be finished off with a cup of tea and a lunch. On one of these visits a dish of prunes was on the bill of fare. Now, Edward and his wife had never eaten prunes before and were evidently in doubt as to how the stones should be managed, and not wishing to betray their ignorance, Edward began to break them with his strong teeth. The noise thus made did not suit Margaret, and she said to him in a stage whisper, *Kochepun e ta* (swallow them), and so this method was followed until the troublesome prunes had been disposed of. Mr. Stout, hearing of this, had quite a joke with Margaret, that the swallowed prune stones would have a very serious result, but it ended with one of her hearty laughs.

Another story about the above two people had nothing comic in it, but a close approach to the tragic.

When I first met Edward in 1891, I noticed a large scar across his forehead and also one on his left hand. On my inquiring the cause of these scars he told me the story I now relate in my own words.

Edward and his wife had gone off in their birch-bark canoe on a hunting expedition. Along the shore he saw signs of a bear being in that vicinity. Taking his gun, he went up into the woods, his wife remaining in the canoe. After a time she heard the report of his gun. Edward had met the bear and fired at it, but only wounded it, and the aroused animal made for him. Unfortunately Edward was lame, having injured one of his legs, which was stiff and bent at right angles. He, therefore, could not run, so he closed with the bear and grabbed it by the throat. As his arms and body were very strong he succeeded in throwing it on its back and gripped it by the throat, with one of his knees pressing it down, but that was all he could do, and except help came he would at length fall a victim to the bear. Margaret waited in the canoe for her husband's return, until becoming anxious she made her way in the direction she had seen him go. When she had gone some distance in the woods she heard him call and found him as already described. She looked for the gun, but it had been broken by a blow on the animal's head. She then took from her husband's pocket a Jack-knife, a very poor stamp of a knife, but her only weapon by which she hoped to save her husband. Blood was flowing from a wound in his forehead and from another in his hand, from the claws of the bear. She proved herself a brave woman as she began with that knife at the bear's neck. It took some hard labour to cut through the tough skin and into the jugular vein, and when she accomplished it bruin's fate was sealed and her husband's life was saved. One can well imagine how, when it was all over, she would break down and

weep. Surely he could have told how she saved him "out of the paw of the bear".

During my earlier years among the Indians, some bands especially, had one bad habit; they would follow travellers when it was near meal or camping time. They would sit around expecting to receive a share of the lunch.

On one occasion I arrived at Split Lake on a Saturday evening with my two canoe men. I took my abode with the Hudson's Bay people, but my men occupied the tent and prepared their own meals. They had rations sufficient for four days, but by Monday morning they were in need of fresh food. The trouble was they had too many lady-friend visitors, a couple all day who of course had to be fed; thus the failure in rations.

A rather amusing story of such an experience has been told by some travellers in the West. As evening was approaching the party had put up their tents and were preparing the evening meal when a band of Indians on ponies approached, coolly alighted, and sat around where the meal was about to be served. Now, it happened that one of the white men had artificial teeth, and getting the attention of the Indians he pushed out his teeth, doing this a couple of times. As the Indians knew nothing of dental plates they were quite startled. But more was to follow. One of the party had an artificial eye. While the Indians were looking he removed this eye, wiped it with his handkerchief, and then replaced it. This was too much for the natives. If white men could conjure like that it was no safe place for them, and jumping on their horses they rode for their lives. Thus the travellers were relieved of their unwelcome visitors, through this peculiar method.

I will now relate a different story about a company of Indians of the West. These were Christian Indians, as many have become wherever missionaries have gone among them with the Good News of God's revealed love. No matter the nationality to which a man may belong, when really converted to God he becomes a new man, for it is still true, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new Creature: old things are passed away, behold! all things are become new".

A number of surveyors were travelling in the direction of Calgary. They had forgotten that it was Sunday, the Lord's day. As they came over rising ground overlooking a valley, they heard singing and knew it was a hymn that was being sung though they could not get the words. They then saw it was quite a band of Indians engaged in the worship of God. They did not understand the language, but without question it was a worship. There was a time when these Indians would have been conjuring or doing the war dance. The travellers, seemingly at least, had forgotten the day and forgotten God, but these Indians, so lately pagan, remembered both. New Men? It looked that way. They had been won to the Christian life by Dr. MacDougall, who was always "John" to his Indians.

The surveyors continued on their way. After they had gone some distance, they saw a man on horse-back following them as fast as he could. They waited and when the rider came up he carried a wrapped side of bacon which he handed to them, and said, "One of our young men found this on the trail and we thought it belonged to you so I have brought it. This Indian was one of the company who were having the service as the white men were passing. When we consider how much an Indian enjoys bacon it meant real practical religion to do as that young man did. This story was related to me by one of the survey party.

In the North peculiar mistakes are often made by those who do not understand the Cree language. Such mistakes may be even quite comic. Some years ago a Scotch cook arrived at York Factory fresh from his home land and took up his duties in the Company's kitchen. He had just finished cooking a fine batch of biscuits, when by a back door, an Indian entered the kitchen and sideling near the warm stove, said, "*Kim me wun*". With that the cook gave him a nice warm biscuit. After a few minutes, the Indian again said, "*Kim me wun*", and to his surprise he received a second biscuit. But when the Indian the third time said, "*Kim me wun*," the cook lost patience and crossly declared, "You can't have another one". Opening the door he ordered the poor Indian out into the rain. He could not understand such treatment, for he was quite innocent of any wrong doing. He had only said, "*Kim me wun*" (It is raining). No doubt the cook told the story of the greedy Indian to some one who understood Cree and was told "that Indian can not speak a word of English". But he maintained that the Indian said three times, "Giv me wun".

For many years Treaty did not reach any of the Indian bands beyond Cross Lake. However, in 1914 it was extended to Split Lake, Nelson House, Oxford House, Island Lake and God's Lake.

Some time in advance of approaching treaty, one of our missionaries is said to have visited Oxford House and he thought it might be well to give the Indians some advice which might help to prepare them for the new experience into which they were about to enter. After other instruction he said, "Every man over twenty-one years of age will be given a vote". Now, the interpreter was by no means noted for his wisdom, and evidently knew nothing about voting, but he did know the value of a boat. Thus, misunderstanding the



speaker, he interpreted "Every man over twenty-one years will be given a boat". Of course this seemed wonderfully generous, but some way or other they waited in vain as the boats failed to materialize.

The above stories are but instances of mistakes that interpreters are apt to make. On one occasion in the Cross Lake church a guest preacher was giving a sermon on the love and fatherhood of God. In the course of his discourse he said, "We cannot think too much of God". The double negative apparently led the interpreter astray as he rendered it the very opposite to the thought the preacher wished to convey, "We should not be thinking too much about God". This was really a serious mistake, but it is rather awkward, before a congregation, to take an interpreter to task. The one to whom I refer was rather a superior native, and in general was correct in his interpretations.

An Indian local preacher in a service attempted to account for the many religions which he had heard about. His explanation deserved at least the credit of being original. He said to the people, "Christ had twelve disciples and every one of them had a different religion". It may be true that the New Testament writers were of varied types, but not of different religions as my good native friend, Thomas, thought.

An old Cross Lake medicine man, whom I knew very well, came to one of our missionary dispensers, asking medicine for a granddaughter who was much troubled with ear-ache. The lady dispenser was ignorant of the Cree language and was without an interpreter, a circumstance from which misunderstanding may easily arise. The lady thought the old man wanted the medicine for himself. Having it ready she motioned to him to come near and said to him, "Now turn your head to one side". She forcibly turned his head with his

ear upwards, "No! No"! expostulated the old man. "Yes! Yes"! she urged, and at the same time poured the medicine into his ear.

I can imagine the old man turning toward his home wondering at such proceedings when he wanted medicine for his grandchild with her aching ear. If he ever made another attempt, I am unable to say.

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## CHAPTER 31

### IRENE AT SCHOOL

OUR ELDEST DAUGHTER, Frances Irene, attended school in Flesherton and lived in the home of her aunt, Mrs. W. H. Thurston, whose husband was Editor and Proprietor of the Fleshterton Advance.

In the summer of 1911 Irene passed with honors her entrance examination and after vacation was taking High School work. It was hard for us, her parents, to have her so far away but we thus arranged that she might have opportunities for education which she could not have had if we kept her with us in the far North.

On in that winter we were startled one day by news coming through Winnipeg that Irene was very ill. It was suggested that she might be a case of meningitis, as at times she became unconscious.

Though it was well on in the winter when we received this news we at once began preparation to make the journey to Winnipeg and Ontario. This would mean a journey by dog train over the lake which would occupy at least eight days.

We failed to obtain Cross Lake men and dogs, but just then there arrived from Split Lake three men with two trains of dogs on their way to Norway House. They kindly agreed to take us along, and we were ready for an early start next morning. The men were all running as Mrs. Gaudin and I were both riding in fixed-up carriages. By nightfall we were forty miles on our way and spent the night in the shack

of an Indian named John Bull. He was said to remember James Evans, and was an uncle of Dr. John McDougall's first wife. Our sleeping place was on the floor of John's palace, the best spot he could give us. Three Split Lake men and John himself had their different places on the floor. We had supper and after devotions all prepared to turn in. We first covered our bed spot with a tarpaulin as a special protection for our robe and blankets, and we slept in some of our day clothes. Shortly after devotions, I said to Mrs. Gaudin, "Do you know a very strange feeling has come over me, an assurance that Irene is all right"? "Well that is wonderful", she answered, "just such an assurance has also come to me". By two witnesses our worry lifted and we slept in peace. Next day we arrived at the Norway House post-office and received letters direct from Flesherton with good news of Irene's recovery. She had been taken to Toronto to a specialist and through his recommendation a nice home in the nearby country was found, just a quiet but interesting farm home of very fine people. There she had greatly improved in health, just as we had been assured in the little Indian shack. Mrs. Gaudin remained over at Norway House for a week awaiting fresh news by the incoming mail, which arrived every two weeks. I, however, started for home. Mr. J. T. Blackford, then Chief Fire Ranger, very kindly had one of his men, with a very fine train of dogs, convey me forty-two miles to the last stopping place, and then returned home the same day, thus covering eighty-four miles. "Some dogs", you say. At this stopping was a "Mountie" with an assistant, each with a train of dogs and two Indian runners. They were on their way to Split Lake through Cross Lake. They had agreed to carry my lunch box and robes while I was to run. I started on a nice trot along with the two Indians, the mounties riding behind on their sleds. The



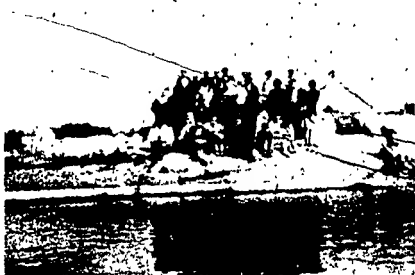
*Mrs. Gaudin and Esther*



*Manse and church at Cross Lake where the Gaudins lived for 20 years. Preparing for a winter trip.*



*Travel by canoe in the summer.*



*The Indians gather to bid farewell to the Gaudins leaving for Winnipeg.*



*Irene, Dr. Gaudin and Mrs. Gaudin at Cross Lake.*

distance for the run home was eighteen miles. There was a good trail for both men and dogs. Our travel method was to put on a good spurt till we were some distance ahead of the trains, when we would slow down till the dogs were getting close, then off again we would go. When we had made half way, one of the Indians gave up the run and walked in behind the sleds while the two of us kept our pace and made the 18 miles in three hours. Of course I was "young" then at 52! It is true I was a little stiff during the evening but was none the worse next morning.

Mrs. Gaudin, after her week's stay at Norway House, arrived in fine condition and with still better news of Irene's continued improvement in health.

Early the following summer, 1912, Mrs. Gaudin with the two children, Nelson and Esther, went to Ontario where Irène was staying. They then went on to Mrs. Gaudin's old home, Oak Point, on the Restigouche River and the Bay de Chaleur, where they spent most of the summer and where Irene became her real self again. In September they all returned once more to Cross Lake, which was indeed a great joy to me, as in the meantime I had been quite alone. Irene was at this time sixteen years of age. The following summer she entered Whitby Ladies' College, where she continued for two years. Dr. and Mrs. Hare, then Principals of the College, were ever her kind friends. After a year in collegiate and one in teaching, she took two years' training in an Episcopal Hospital in Philadelphia.

In 1920 Irene became the wife of Clarence Honner, a returned soldier and only son of Rev. Geo. Honner, who performed the ceremony in Transcona. They spent their first year with us at Cross Lake. Clarence taught the Indian Reserve school which was situated on the farther side of a

branch of the Nelson River. One morning on his way to school, during the early freeze up, he followed a dog sled trail, when all at once the ice gave way and down he went, up to his waist. It was well that this did not happen in deeper water or it might have been more serious.

When our neighbour, Mr. McLeod, an old timer of the Hudson's Bay Company, heard of this exploit, he laughingly said, "No use. Clarence, boy! No use for you to try that. It is only papa Gaudin that can walk on the water". This was through crossing the River with a load of hay by a tongue of ice with open water on both sides. The hay hid the ice so he could see nothing but water. This was what Mr. McLeod called "walking on the water".

Clarence and Irene, with their son Ernest, have for some years been living in Sussex, N.B., where he is editor of the paper. Both are active in war service.

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## CHAPTER 32

### A BRAVE DEVOTED LIFE

**M**RS. GAUDIN'S life in the North was a constant devotion to the sick and needy. She thought little of long journeys by canoe or dog train with Indian guide, wherever need or suffering called her. This was characteristic of Mrs. Gaudin's life, especially during the thirty-nine years spent among the Indians of the North. Nothing could deter her from any service which she accepted as a duty.

Mrs. Gaudin was born in the year 1865 at Oak Point, Bonaventure county, Quebec Province, on a farm bordering on the Restigouche River, near to the Bay de Chaleur. Her young life was humble, and Irish and Scotch blood flowed in her veins. Her life was influenced by both Methodists and Presbyterians. Her father's family was large and comforts were few, yet she had her enjoyments often among families of relatives near at hand.

When her father died she was only fifteen years of age, but carried more responsibility than was due a young girl of that age. She would harness and hitch up a horse and go into the woods and bring home a load of wood. When an elder brother arrived home from where he had been working her team efforts came to an end.

She had received her education at the public school, and some years later attended the Ontario Ladies' College at Whitby. After a few years she earned her living in a country store, thus gaining both experience and independence.

She then tried her hand at nursing an old lady confined to her room. In this home were two sons well up in years

but by no means noted for their industry. When they had failed in providing wood for the kitchen stove Anna thought she would give them something to think about. She prepared the dinner and then placed all in the containers outside in the sun saying to the two men, "I am doing the next best thing to having a fire in the kitchen", and then went into the house. This little scheme worked well, and soon there was a goodly supply of wood. This story reveals what even in her young days Mrs. Gaudin was capable of.

In the course of a few years after this there came within her an urge toward some service her home surroundings could not provide, and an opportunity was offered her to enter the nursing profession in the Protestant Episcopal Hospital at Philadelphia. Some of her friends tried to dissuade her from such a course, "Other girls stayed at home, why not she"? But she had "put her hand to the plow", and was not going to "look back". She was often lonely with everything strange, but stuck to her work and in a few months was appointed head nurse over her ward. Miss Davis, the lady Superintendent, evidently had every confidence in her Canadian nurse.

Mrs. Gaudin's first introduction to the North Land began when she took passage on the old *Red River*, originally a barge in which an engine had been installed. On it there was no regular accommodation for passengers. The two rooms in the pilot house were given up to the four passengers, Rev. J. Semmens and Bishop Newnham on one side, and Anna and a young girl on the other. This was the accommodation for the twelve days of this important journey.

After our marriage, as soon as our travelling arrangements were completed, we started out on our first journey together. Considerable variety in a 200 mile canoe trip may

be expected and so Mrs. Gaudin found it, as we passed on our way by river, lake, rapids and portage, till we reached our Mission in the native settlement at Nelson House. She enjoyed the miles of straight canoe travel as also the running of rapids that she felt were as safe for her as for the Indians. She liked the change to the short portages around rapids which could not be run; also to be about the camp at the close of the day's travel. Then, as often occurred, a heavy sea would cause the canoe to roll and pitch but as she believed the men were masters of all such conditions she had no fear. The native canoe men will not run risks, but when in the middle of a lake heavy wind comes up they have to go on. On one such occasion, when travelling together, I became very nervous on her account, but she seemed absolutely unafraid. The difficult part to Mrs. Gaudin was the very long portages by which the different water systems were connected on the shorter route.

Thus day after day we were moving further north until the evening of the ninth day the buildings of the Mission came into view. We passed on two miles to the Hudson's Bay Company fort where the brave wife of the agent was awaiting our coming. What a welcome Mrs. Gaudin received from Mrs. Stout with open arms. This was ever their continued kind attitude toward ourselves, our children, and our work throughout the years of our friendship at Nelson House, as also in the years that followed till they both passed away.

Throughout her long years of service in the North, Mrs. Gaudin travelled thousands of miles in winter by dog sled, in summer by canoe. Her winter travel was often in much below zero weather. On one occasion I took her in a carriage to visit an Indian home twenty-five miles distant. The home was that of Edward Hart's who figured in the bear story.

He was at the time suffering from an abscess at the back of his head just at the root of his hair. Mr. and Mrs. Stout had gone with us but returned home Monday morning. We remained two days longer, Mrs. Gaudin doing what she could to relieve him. The next week word came that Edward was very much worse and we decided to bring him to the Mission. To carry this out I started some hours before day-light under the stars and Northern-lights and made the twenty-five miles by sunrise. He had a carriole, a good train of dogs and a young man to drive them and we arrived at the Mission before dark. In the meantime Mrs. Gaudin was preparing for his comfort. She put up a bed at one end of the kitchen covered by an awning with nice Bible pictures pinned on the inside. She then made an exchange in stoves between the cook-stove of the kitchen and the box-stove of the inside room. This she did that the sick man would not be troubled by the cooking operations. Then Mrs. Gaudin started on the abscess and of course wrought a cure. In three weeks he was able to return to his home driving his own dogs. This truly illustrates how we treated our Indians as people of human flesh and blood. While Mrs. Gaudin ministered to the sick and needy for eleven years among the Nelson House people, her greatest work was for twenty years to the native people of Cross Lake. Here in addition to the common travel over the Indian Reserve, other excursions were made over distances from twenty to one hundred and twenty miles. On one occasion she was on the trail eleven days as she went among the far distant hunting camps during an epidemic of la grippe. From place to place she went, often long distances from one camping place to another, sometimes sleeping in her carriole that she might be ready to give attention to the sick when she arrived at another camp. On the last day of the journey a heavy snow storm came on which so impeded

the dogs that Mrs. Gaudin put on her snow-shoes and walked at least nine miles. This so helped the dogs that she arrived home late that night, tired, but wonderfully well after her extended journey and work among the sick in the camps.

One of Mrs. Gaudin's many shorter trips of some twenty-five miles, was taken to relieve a woman who had accidentally broken a needle in her hand and this was causing her so much pain that she got but little sleep. With the assistance of her native driver Mrs. Gaudin put the woman under an anaesthetic and by a little cutting of the hand the needle was removed, the hand bound up and the woman was soon sound asleep.

A case well worthy of mention as further evidence of Mrs. Gaudin's skill was that of an Indian badly hurt in carrying a heavy log from the woods down toward his canoe. This log along its extent had great sharp points left from the old fallen off branches. As he came down on the smooth slanting rock he slipped and fell. The sharp points tore his forehead across and then to the roots of hair and back cutting the top of his head. We happened to be away that afternoon as we had taken a party of visiting Winnipeg friends to the great White Mud Rapids. As soon as it was known that Mrs. Gaudin was home, a Royal Canadian policeman brought the injured man over to the Mission for her attention. As it was already well on toward night Mrs. Gaudin had to operate by lamplight. He was first put under an anaesthetic. The hair on the top of his head was closely cut and the wound there was found to be not deep so that cleansing and sticking was sufficient but the one on his forehead was deep and long and turned at right angles joining the cut on his head. This required many stitches which were all cleverly done. Our Winnipeg friends were surprised at the skill with

which this operation was performed. When Treaty payments were being made, Dr. Norquay, employed by the Department of Indian Affairs, removed the stitches and frankly said, "I could not have done it any better than it has been done by Mrs. Gaudin".

I will mention one difficult case from among many treated successfully by Mrs. Gaudin, cases which a doctor said were without any chance of recovery. This is saying much but not more than facts justify. Through years of experience, she understood the Indian's physical condition as well as his mental makeup, which helped in his treatment. Felix Scott was an outstanding Indian in the Cross Lake Band, having been in time Councillor and Chief for a number of years. When fairly advanced in age he was taken with a very peculiar disease which spread over his entire body. It is known in English as "fish scale disease". With an experience of over forty years among four bands of our Northern Indians we never knew of another such a case. He could get little rest from the constant itching nature of this trouble. The unfortunate man had been in this condition for six months without any medical attention, which left him exposed to the useless methods of the Indian medicine man. During this time we were located at Norway House where we spent eight years but moved back to Cross Lake early in July, 1930. We arrived on a Saturday and Felix sent for Mrs. Gaudin Sunday evening. We went at once in our little gasoline boat about two miles distant. Now after he had been neglected for six months, and we began to give him attention, the local priest became busy and in a few days the doctor arrived by plane from Norway House. He gave instruction that Felix was to be taken by his sons to the Norway House Hospital. He refused to go and finally came with his wife into Mrs. Gaudin's little hospital at the Mission. His condition received close study

and we finally decided on his trouble as above, the only remedy available being corn starch poultices. With the assistance of a nurse who was visiting friends, thick poultices of the starch were put on him from his head to his feet, his wife also helping in the operation, all being kept in place by bandages. This remained on him about a day. The poor man was delighted with the relief this remedy brought as for the first time in six months he slept soundly throughout the night. When the next day all was removed, every scale had come off and his body was clean and clear from the old disease so that not even an itchy feeling remained. I may not mention names but there were some, not Indians, who did not seem to be happy about this wonderful cure. Felix and his family happened to be Roman Catholics, but after his healing he began to attend our services. I left him to decide for himself as to his course. At our Easter Morning services he publicly joined our Church, making his pledges in a clear voice, and then, of his own accord gave his reasons for the change, speaking of the joy he had in his new life. I may close this story by saying that for a time Felix suffered persecution, but he remained firm through it all.

The Influenza Epidemic was a real calamity among the Indians of the North. It swept through communities like wild fire. On Reserves entire families were taken down with it. Some few older men escaped. At Cross Lake it was a time of great trial and heroic effort for Mrs. Gaudin to meet the terrible conditions. She was out over the Reserve ministering to the sick and dying, night and day, with but little rest or sleep. Her meals were often eaten from her hand as she prepared medicine or food for another visit. She sometimes carried wood at night from wherever she could find it to start a fire in some cold house where all were down sick. She then organized the few men who were well to provide

wood and water or any other help they could give to those who could not help themselves. For this service the men were supplied with rations for themselves and for their families. The death rate was not as high on the Reserve as it was in the far distant camps which Mrs. Gaudin could not reach through lack of anyone to take her. Some families in two camps were almost wiped out. In one of these there were thirty-one persons among whom were a number of good hunters, but when the epidemic had spent itself less than half survived and not one hunter remained. The bodies were placed in one house. When men were to be found we sent out five of them to bury the dead. One large grave was made, using dynamite to break the deeply frozen ground. The men received no wages for this except that their families were supplied with food during their absence.

One very sad case was that of a fine young man, Alex. McLeod. He had gone forty miles distant to visit his brother and was there taken down with the epidemic. When this was known, Mrs. Gaudin, with a train of dogs and driver, at once started out, if possible to bring him home. His dogs with a driver were there. A carriole was fixed up in which he was placed warmly wrapped and the start was made, Mrs. Gaudin leading the way. She frequently went back to him in her great anxiety to give him some stimulating medicine as she feared he might suddenly collapse. She was not able to bring him more than half way for it was all he could stand, and left him in the home of a Frenchman living by the way. The poor fellow wanted his mother but as she was not fit to go, his sister Norah went and was with her brother when he passed away. Another sad feature was that the brother whom Alex. visited also died from the same dread disease, the two brothers passing away about the same time and were



buried from the same service. It was a hard blow to the parents.

Mrs. Gaudin was matron and nurse for the entire Reserve and in this capacity she issued orders upon the trading stores for food and clothing for the relief of the stricken and weakened people to the amount of \$2,200., which the Department of Indian Affairs paid without a question, and moreover expressed their appreciation of the work she had done for the Indians in that time of suffering and distress. They also proposed to take her on the permanent staff of their nurses. This, however, she felt she could not accept, though appreciating their kind offer.

The severe strain of those weeks began to tell on Mrs. Gaudin's health and strength, and as the flu died away she became sick herself and it was a considerable time before she was able to return to her loved work. When first she wished to go she just lay stretched out in the bottom of the carriage as if in bed while I drove the dogs quietly along the trail. She said, "I can't see any one to-day", and she closed her eyes. When we returned home she went again to bed in the quiet of her upstairs room to rest, her great desire and need after the severe exertion and strain she had passed through.

During the eleven years at distant Nelson House, Mrs. Gaudin was not hindered in her treatment of the sick by the medicine man. When the Indians there became Christians they gave up the old conjurer with his drumming and weird incantations. This superstition still prevailed at Cross Lake in the beginning of our work there, and sometimes the medicine man would be called in to a case which Mrs. Gaudin was treating. Gradually, however, his influence began to pass away. I may give a few instances of the evil and foolish methods of the Indian Conjurer. His interest was centered

in the amount of pay he was to receive, and it had to be forthcoming before he would make any attempt at his art. The better the pay the more likely would be the recovery. I have known of a very good Indian house being passed over to the would-be "doctor" for a promised cure of a poor girl in the last stage of Tuberculosis.

An Indian with la grippe was given to drink the liquid in which tobacco had been soaked. The cure worked so well that the poor man was never sick again, as he passed out before morning. This was one way for an ignorant medicine man to do a great wrong.

Years ago a young boy at Cross Lake was suddenly taken with a severe hemorrhage. I happened to be near and the poor father came over to me half crazed with grief about the condition of his boy. I hastily crossed the river and rushed over for Mrs. Gaudin, and we were soon over to the house but to our surprise we were locked out. The secret of this was that Indian medicine was in operation and if we were allowed in we might spoil the whole affair. Mrs. Gaudin felt very badly but there was nothing we could do except return home. The poor boy did not long survive.

One more case: An Indian, very poorly, came to Mrs. Gaudin for treatment. He was in a tent put up near the back of the church, and on the far side of the mission fence. Suddenly she heard a very loud voice as though a quarrel was going on in the tent. She ran around through a gateway, and as she came near the tent she heard the loud voice shouting, "Get out of there and never come again". She then entered the tent and found there Keewatin, a noted conjurer, the father of the sick man. He had his son's breast bared and from it he was exorcising an evil spirit that he claimed was the cause of his son's illness. "See", he said as Mrs.

Gaudin entered the tent, "It's right there", and he pointed to a special spot on his son's chest. As, apparently, the "evil spirit" continued to maintain its special locality the old conjurer, no doubt, concluded that it was too near the church for best results, and he moved his son away from such baneful influences. Old Keewatin's endeavors were unavailing to save the life of his son, who lived only a few months after this. The drumming, conjuring old witch doctors passed away some years before we left Cross Lake, but even while such men lived Mrs. Gaudin's faithful and successful work always held the attention and faith of the greater part of the Indian community, so that only a very few of the more ignorant and superstitious paid any attention to the medicine man. The tables even began to turn, so that the medicine men came to seek her help for some sick grandchild.

Mrs. Gaudin was not only a great nurse but also a devoted wife and mother, of seven promising children. Neither doctor or nurse was available as they came to us. During the course of a few years four of these little ones were called back to Him who gave them. With almost super-human courage she covered and lined the little coffins and we tenderly laid them away in their last resting places. She too has now passed away to join these little ones, but the memory of her unselfish life abides. Three other children are left. They rise up to call her blessed. The Indian people of the north, as also those who were associated with her and whom she loved and helped, all mourned her passing on the 9th of August, 1940. No wonder these people of the North lamented her. "There was never one like her, and there never will be another who only thought of herself when there was no one else to be thought about". This is the sincere testimony of the native people who through the years had been the recipients of her loving ministries. At Nelson

House, led by the missionary Mr. Blackford, they are about to erect in the church a memorial tablet sacred to her memory.

“Greater love hath no man than this that  
a man lay down his life for his friends”.

Mrs. Gaudin's was a love that gave her life in full measure in service for others.

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Our only son, Nelson Sutherland, after finishing his time at school and college, taught in the mission schools at Oxford House and Cross Lake. He then filled the double position of teacher and Missionary at Poplar Point Mission. After four years at this he entered the Hudson's Bay Company's service and now with his wife, Mona, has been in charge of the Company's post at Nelson House, now located at Poplar Point. In all these various positions he evidently has had a goodly degree of success.

Our youngest daughter, Esther Evangeline, having become a fully fledged school teacher, taught three years, first at Rossville Reserve School, then at Fisher River Mission graded school. On January, 5, 1935, she was married to J. A. Ross at the home of her aunt, Mrs. W. H. Thurston, Flesherton, Ontario, the service being conducted by myself. Jack is a clever wireless operator. After sundry moves he was given charge of the army station at Moncton. He has now been overseas about two years and this year received New Year's honors from His Majesty the King. Esther, with her two boys and baby daughter, resides at 41 Cornell St., Moncton. She has been very much in demand by the W.M.S. of all the churches as a speaker on the Indian mission work of the North, as represented by her father and mother for many years. Esther is known among her many friends as “Betty.”